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June, 1994

Volume 3, Issue 11



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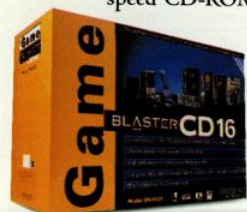


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BUZZWORDS...

Have you ever noticed those exercise steps that people work out on? People who own houses with stairs buy a free-standing step. Is that necessary?

It's similar to buzzwords and jargon. Without naming any perpetrators, I'm going to mention some of the latest and greatest buzzwords that have been started up by the computer industry. Not all of them have been pushed on the mass audience of America, and of those that have, not all of them have become common parlance because of computer people.

It started, or at least came to my attention when people in offices across the country stopped talking to each other and started "interfacing." The definition has even made it into at least one dictionary. People also don't hold meetings, take meetings or do meetings any more. They "network." It seems that anything that makes our world a little less human and a little more computer-like is in.

Me? I don't interface and I don't have an interface. I don't network, although I do use a network. Nope, I talk and meet. Time and humanity are short enough as it is to give them away just to be on the "cutting edge" of the latest language trend. Think how dehumanizing it is—when you talk to someone, you don't have to just talk. You can shout, whisper, yell, cajole, scream, holler, etc. ad infinitum. But if you interface, you just interface.

Enough of that soapbox. Let's talk about some other buzzwords that stick in my craw. The big one, of course, is "virtual reality." Everybody's talking about it, everybody is claiming that there game has it or approaches it (some people may actually be right) and at every convention or meeting (or network, naturally), it's the topic of conversation. What is it? No one knows! Virtual reality means that it isn't real but it seems real. All of the "virtual reality" I've seen looks polygonal and blocky. They didn't fool me into thinking they were real. For awhile at least, lets tone down the use of this term.

Let's also can the term "multimedia." Every game with sound and graphics is a multimedia experience using the strictest definition of the word. It use more than one medium (sound and pictures) to convey its meaning. Multimedia is nothing new. Television is multimedia. So are the grand majority of games.

"Interactive", particularly when used with the words "movie" or "cinema" have been almost as pervasive and ubiquitous as multimedia. I have no problem with games that borrow heavily from cinematic styles. Often times, I like them. But please, spare me the "interactive film/movie/cinema/theater" tag line. I can figure out for myself that it's using the same techniques found in movies, and if I can't, will I enjoy the game less?

"Spare me the 'interactive film/movie/cinema/theater' tag line."

What are the reasons for this? There are several. One is that it's simply arrogance. People like to sound like experts, so they make up terms for things that don't need terms. By inventing a term like "interactive movie" for "game," we can feel like we know more than anybody else about what we're discussing. It's a way to feel like an expert without being one. It also makes the work of a particular industry sound exciting and important. Try reading an education journal and you'll see what I mean. Teachers are notorious for jargon.

It's also marketing hyperbole. When the first "truly interactive multimedia experience" comes out, whatever it is and whenever it happens, it'll just be a game. The only difference will be that "interactive multimedia experience" will be a copyright of the company producing the software. Trust your instincts and trust your intelligence.

Just remember that just because someone is using jargon or buzzwords doesn't mean they know what they are talking about.

"Time and humanity are short enough as it is to give them away just to be on the 'cutting edge' of the latest language trend."

STEVE HONEYWELL
EDITOR

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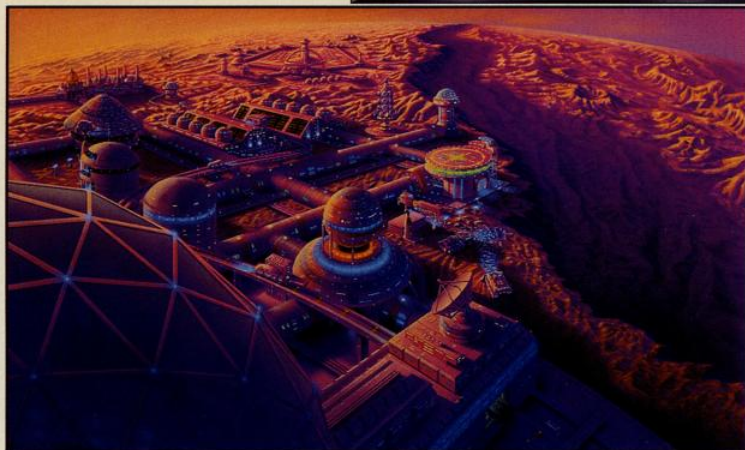
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CGR FEATURES

INITIALIZE 4

Why are there so many buzzwords?

POSTAGE DUE 10

Opinions from everywhere on every topic under the sun.

CGR REVIEWS 18

Detroit, Ultimate Domain and Kingmaker with a host of others.

CGR HARDWARE 58

Roland releases a daughter card and ThrustMaster reinvents the wheel.

ADD-ONS AND ALTERATIONS 64

SimCity 2000 gets scenarios and Barkley prevents burnin.

CHILD SUPPORT 68

The Peanuts gang comes to Windows, as do extinct creatures.

COMPUTER CONFIDENTIAL 70

Arnie Katz offers his opinions on the latest PC trends.

DATLINE: FANDOM 72

The best from the world of fan magazine publishing

IN THE WORKS 74

Microsoft unveils its plans for the operating system of the future.

Q & A WITH THE GAME DOCTOR 76

Questions answered by the one and only silicon surgeon.

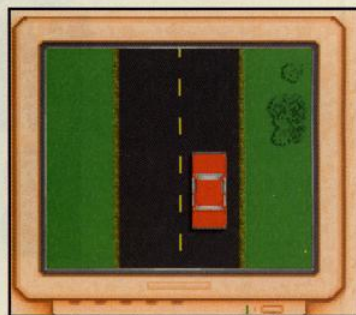
CGR PREVIEWS 78

UFO: Enemy Within, Corridor 7 and more.

CGR STRATEGY 88

Alone in the Dark 2, Nomad and Carriers at War II.

18



86



92



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34



46



64



68



87



88



96

CGR REVIEWS

Detroit by Impressions	18
Origamo by QQP	22
Fields of Glory	
by Spectrum HoloByte	24
Disciples of Steel by FormGen	26
Formula One by Domark	28
Great Naval Battles Vol. 2	
by SSI	30
Ravenloft by SSI	32
Ultimate Domain	
by Software Toolworks	34
Hollywood Mogul	
by DeVuono DeVuono Games	38
Bridge Baron by MicroLeague	40
Arctic Baron by Ready Soft	42
Tigers on the Prowl by HPS	44
Vikings II	
by Realism Entertainment	46
Kingdoms of Germany	
by Realism Entertainment	48
Operation Crusader	
by Avalon Hill	50
Kingmaker by Avalon Hill	52
Astro Chase 3D by Interplay	56

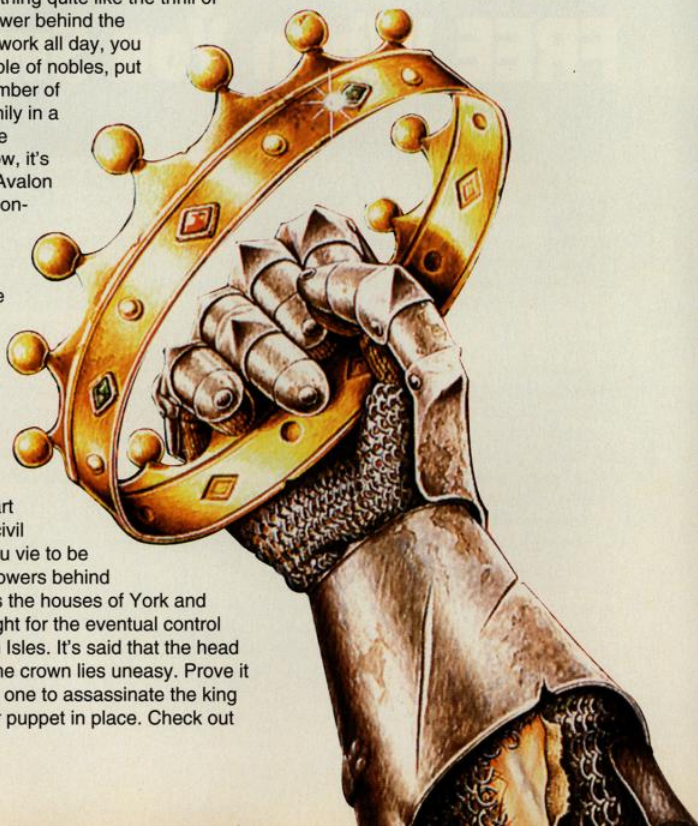
CGR PREVIEWS

Outpost by Sierra On-Line	78
Alien Legacy by Dynamix	81
Zephyr by New World Computing	82
Inherit the Earth	
by New World Computing	83
Hexx: Heresy of the Wizard	
by Psygnosis	85
UFO: Enemy Unknown	
by MicroProse	86
Corridor 7 by Capstone	87

CGR STRATEGY

Alone in the Dark 2	
by I-Motion	88
Nomad by Gametek	92
Carriers at War II	
by Strategic Studies Group	96

There's nothing quite like the thrill of being the power behind the throne. You work all day, you kill off a couple of nobles, put your pet member of the royal family in a position to be crowned. Now, it's mead time. Avalon Hill's latest conversion of one of their board games to the PC is Kingmaker, a historical recreation of the War of the Roses that split England apart into bloody civil war. Now you vie to be one of the powers behind the crown as the houses of York and Lancaster fight for the eventual control of the British Isles. It's said that the head that wears the crown lies uneasy. Prove it by being the one to assassinate the king and put your puppet in place. Check out page 52.



The Case of the Overworked Employee

I'm Bernie. The mutt's Jock.

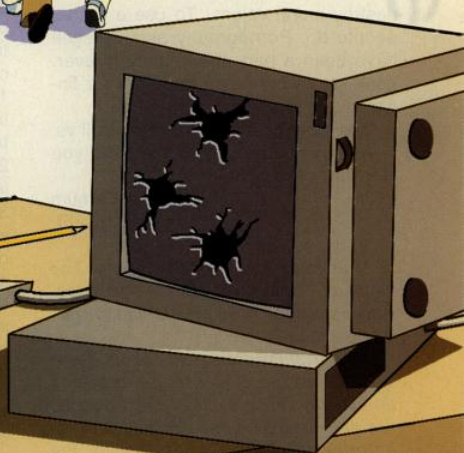
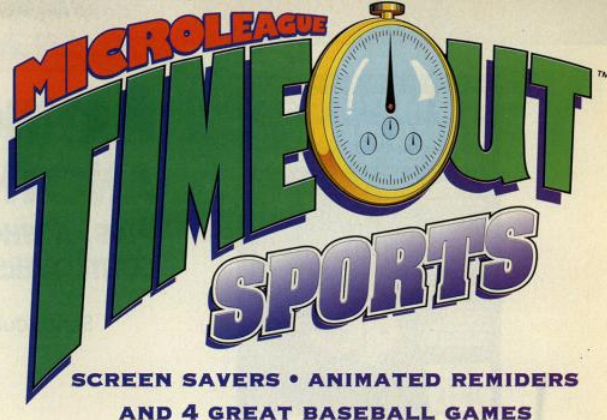
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FINGER POINTING. . .

Dear CGR:

I just received your April, 1994 issue. Keep it up, you put out a great magazine.

About your Game Over section: keep it out. One of the satisfactions of playing a computer game is finishing it and being treated to a great ending. Giving this away is like telling someone how a book ends.

About Kevin O'Connor's response to your video game regulation comments: get a life. Computer games, television and other forms of entertainment do not destroy moral values. To use a cliché, people do. Pornography and violence have been a part of humanity forever. Look somewhere else to point your finger.

One more on Wing Commander II vs. X-Wing: who cares. You like what you like and I'll like what I like.

Patrick Barnum
Tampa, FL

Thanks for the kind comments. The status of Game Over still remains undecided, since the polls are starting to split. It'll be a tough race.

I hold with my statements about game violence and sex. I am not opposed to an industry rating system, but I also do not believe that games or any form of entertainment are responsible for the erosion of moral values in the country. On the contrary, I think the probable cause of increased game violence and the desire for increased game violence is more than likely due to said eroded values. We as an industry, we as parents and we as people need to take some responsibility for our actions.

WCII vs. X-Wing is still a hot topic. Like the baseball hot-stove leagues, this topic will not die. For a different slant on this question from an old colleague, read on, read on.

RATING SYSTEMS GET ANOTHER WORKOUT. . .

PLUS, A WHOLE NEW WAY TO LOOK AT THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN X-WING AND WC II.

Send your questions, comments, witicisms and criticisms to:

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THE REAL BURNING ISSUES. . .

To Steve Honeywell and his happy letter column:

What's the deal?

When we would get together, you'd boast of two things: 1) something personal which I'd rather have your wife confirm for me, and 2) how smart your readers are.

So what's going on with the same old arguments between WC II and X-Wing—graphics, sound and playability have been done to death, so it's time to help the readers move onto the secondary considerations:

- 1) Eco-stuff. Which uses fewer dead trees in the packaging and documentation?
- 2) Which cinematics induce deeper cravings for greasy, salty popcorn?
- 3) Which game is easier to control once you've gotten your ThrustMaster all greasy and salty?
- 4) P.C. Police. Mix of differently gendered, believed, colored, speciesed (?) supporting characters. Wheelchair bound pilots score double here as do inner children and anyone married to Jeff Gillooly.
- 5) The Dramamine factor. Get a motion-sickness-prone friend and a good plastic cover for the keyboard to find which game will cause a lunch toss at 66Mhz.
- 6) The dinosaur factor. Will the credits scroll past unaided in five minutes or less on a 286?
- 7) Sexual frustration index. Which is best on Saturday night when you have to engage in a little channeling of frustration into outer-space violence?
- 8) Spousal/boss approval. Which game will they tolerate you playing longer instead of dealing with their demands? Or which will they want to try out?
- 9) Pause principle. If you're forced to

return to a pitched battle after a 20 minute phone call, which game will be easiest to restart without being completely lost? Can you really tell where those frozen pixels and polygons were heading, let alone your own ship?

10) The house rabbit factor. Which box will a free-running lagomorph prefer to eat (My bunny actually thought Mantis had a better tasting box than just about anything in the game library.)?

David S. Moskowitz
Venice, CA

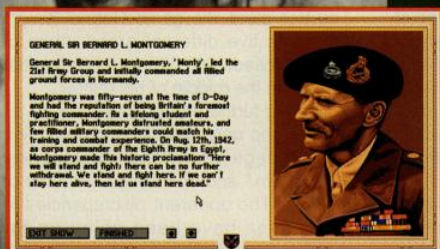
For the uninformed, Mr. Moskowitz, at one point in his career, was the computer games editor for Video Games and Computer Entertainment. He's currently keeping himself busy writing game scripts and doing some translation work. Nice to hear from you, Dave.

Please accept these answers and additions to your questions.

- 1) What do you mean? Are you asking me to believe that paper doesn't grow on trees?
- 2) Neither. Nick at Nite does that for me.
- 3) You know, I can think of so many possible comments for this question, but none of them are printable.
- 4) Agreed, but only if getting in touch with your masculine/feminine side also scores double points and if Robert Bly references score triple.
- 5) Isn't that what Coaster was for?
- 6) Are you nuts? 5 minute credits for an Origin game? Not even on a Pentium!
- 7) See answer #3.
- 8) As far as my wife is concerned, neither. As far as my boss is concerned, either. Your boss, however, my vary.
- 9) When I have to pause, I prefer a game like Minesweeper or Checkers.
- 10) We don't know from bunnies, but one Sendai employee's wife's cat did eat his X-Wing box. No joke!

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ALLIED TOTALS		- MEN FIT FOR DUTY	
Infantry	Active: 8,000	Lost: 1,150	
	300	30	
Armor	Active: 100	20	
	10	14	
Artillery	Active: 100	100	
	10	10	
GERMAN TOTALS		- MEN FIT FOR DUTY	
Infantry	Active: 14,000	Lost: 4,400	
	23	15	
Armor	Active: 100	10	
	10	10	
Artillery	Active: 100	100	
	10	10	
THE ALLIES WIN			

Battle Results: Win or lose?

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The CGR Review Breakdown

All numerical scores are based on a 1-100 scale, with scores above 90 indicating a superior effort.

The numerical scores at the top of each review reflect how the three reviewers feel the game rates in three different areas. Interface reflects how well designed the game is from the user's perspective. Playability indicates how easy and fun the game controls are to operate. Graphics and sound scores show the level of the audio-visual qualities of the game are. Replay value is a determination of the desire to replay the game once it has been won. The overall score is a combination of the above ratings and the three reviewers' scores.

Games are tested on 386/33 and 486/66 Myoda computers using a wide variety of sound cards and controllers for the most complete testing possible.

THE CGR REVIEWERS...

Kevin: Engaged to be married in September, Kevin has evidenced no cold feet as of yet. It is a little disturbing that he's been playing a lot of Hollywood Mogul and making sappy love stories, though. Kevin loves a good war game or a good strategy game, but little lights him up like the challenge of a new builder. Along with Hollywood Mogul, Kevin has been getting involved with the intricacies of Avalon Hill's Kingmaker this past month as well as running a game of VGA Planets.

Ted: Engaged in a desperate search for Hot Wheels track, Ted is currently going through nostalgia withdrawal. A puzzle maven, Ted has never been overly thrilled with most sports games, with the possible exception of driving sims. Now with his own hardware column, Ted is excited about all of the new toys he's been getting. When he hasn't been installing cards or testing speakers this month, Ted has been engrossed in Software Toolworks' Ultimate Domain.

Steve: Engaged in setting up his wife's new Macintosh, Steve is looking for another power strip. Thanks to the Mac, Steve has been going back to some classic Mac games like M4, Crystal Caliburn and the new Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis Macintosh CD-ROM. While he considers himself an eclectic gamer, Steve has never had a lot of fondness for highly technical flight simulations. He loves golf sims, puzzle games and military simulations most of all.

NO ARGUMENT HERE...

Dear CGR:

I write this letter in hopes that I can encourage some of you parents out there to throw away your child's Nintendo or Sega and let them venture into the wonderful world of computer games. Why, do you ask? Let me introduce myself: I am a graduate of the Nintendo and Sega [camp] and have found that not only does a wide arrangement of computer games entertain, but many of them educate. I'm not talking about education, I'm talking about the very games that you review here in this magazine (Red Baron, Aces of the Pacific, Battles of the North Atlantic, 1939-43, Aces Over Europe, etc.).

These are considered to be entertainment games, yet I've learned more about World War I playing Red Baron than I ever did in school. I learned more about World War II playing Aces of the Pacific than I ever did in my honor history class.

I consider my computer to be an interactive history book; a place that not only can I learn about history but where I can also participate. Show me a history book that allows you to actually take the place of Hitler or fly with the aces of the Pacific Theater in World War II. After playing a number of games, I became aware of the struggles and battles fought. I not only knew the dates of when the battles happened, but I also participated in them. I credit my computer for a lot of the success that I've had in school.

So, to all of you parents who are in the other room playing on the computer while your kids are playing a mindless arcade game, why not invite them in and show them a couple of your games?

Joe Folley
Hanford, CA

The computer is an excellent teaching tool for a variety of reasons. Speaking for myself, I got into computer games because it was an opportunity for me to play war games while I was by myself. Because of this, I became more and more interested in World War II, specifically the North African campaign, thanks to MicroProse's Decision in the Desert (made, if memory serves, by Sid Meier and Ed Bever).

Education is more effective when the learner shows an interest in the subject. There are few better ways to make learning enjoyable than to hide the fact from the student that they are actually learning. Thanks for the letter, Joe. You're right on target.

SCORING DISCREPANCIES...

Dear CGR:

If I can get you off your soapbox for a few minutes, maybe you can help me understand your rating system.

Please take a look at page 41 of the April, 1994 issue. The three bold red ratings shown there average out to a 91% rating as shown on page 40. Fine, but where did these red ratings come from? Ted has given the game Gabriel Knight ratings in five different areas, none of which exceeds 89. Why is there a great big "91" in the middle of his review?

Looking further in the magazine for an answer, the only information I could find was on page 12 in "The CGR Review Breakdown," and that turned out to be of no help. The apparent discrepancies in the ratings have been going on for months. I'm writing because no one has brought it to your attention. How about a few lines in the next issue explaining what is going on? Thanks.

Edward Judd
Dona Ana, NM

The answer to the apparent problem is simple, Edward. The ratings given by each of the reviewers is not necessarily an average of the scores at the top of their review.

As an example, let's take Gabriel Knight from the April issue. We'll use my review (the one on the bottom). The average of the five scores across the top of my review is 79. I gave the game a 90. Why? Let's go inside what these numbers reflect and what they don't reflect.

The lowest score I gave was for replay value, because once you've finished GK, you probably won't want to go back and play it again. This does not mean that the overall score should suffer; if that were the case, no adventure or role-playing game would ever score well in Computer Game Review, because those games, as a general rule, do not offer much replay value.

Another example: with those five scores, a classic like Zork would get from me, a decent score for interface and playability, 0 for graphics, 0 for sound and very low for replay value. Does that mean it's a bad game? Not at all!

While those five scores cover a lot of territory, they do not cover how much fun we had playing the game, how deeply we were pulled into the experience, or any of the other intangible factors that turn a good game into a great game or a great game into a classic.

Medieval England

A time of castles and conquest. The throne is empty.

The serfs are restless.

Rebellion is in the air.

The Lords of the Realm invite you to join their ranks.

Build your castles. Cultivate your lands.

Marshal your resources.

Take the risk.

Go for the Crown.



Lords of the Realm™

*Coming soon from
Impressions™*



A FEW COMMENTS...

Picked your magazine up at the local Hastings Bookstore. Next day realized that it was not a [competing magazine], but I find that I'm glad I bought it.

I had some comments:

First, glitches, bugs and quirks: It is only a quirk if the problem [in a game] only occurs in a very specific, unique place or if the company is up front about the problem and is honest about the work-arounds, if any. For an example of a work-around issue that qualifies as a quirk, Privateer has some problem with the Pro Audio Spectrum boards. The work-around, clearly laid out on a bright yellow insert, is to use Sound Blaster emulation. Works great. For a unique quirk, one of the aces "goes stealth" (disappears from view while remaining in play) in Wing Commander. It is only that ace, and the problem can be cured by using the Alt V key to turn off the video for that mission.

Quirks don't bother me. With lots of code, quirks are bound to surface, some rarely. To my knowledge, the stealth ace quirk was not found until 1993. With a game like Wing Commander, that has to qualify as rarely appearing.

It also counts as a quirk if something

works "wrong"—I.E. differently from the rest of the company's products (mouse support in Privateer is not Wing Commander style. I like the WC mouse method. I don't like the joystick emulation mouse method.).

It is a glitch if something doesn't work right. Glitches only count if they involve a major, core control or item or if they are not acknowledged. For example, if a CH Flightstick or similar joystick, or if Sound Blaster sound doesn't work, that is a glitch that matters. In Wing Commander II and WCA, it is a glitch that using a mouse results in uncontrolled autofire of the blasters. It would not be a glitch if Origin acknowledged the problem.

It is a bug if the program just doesn't work right. Crash bugs and the like.

Bugs should not be tolerated. It would be nice if glitches were taken care of by being acknowledged (and I would note that it is only fair that some alternate methods of controlling a game won't work as well as the method the game is designed for) or by patches being provided (note that Lightspeed allows for both methods of using a mouse instead of a joystick—the Origin standard and the joystick emulation method).

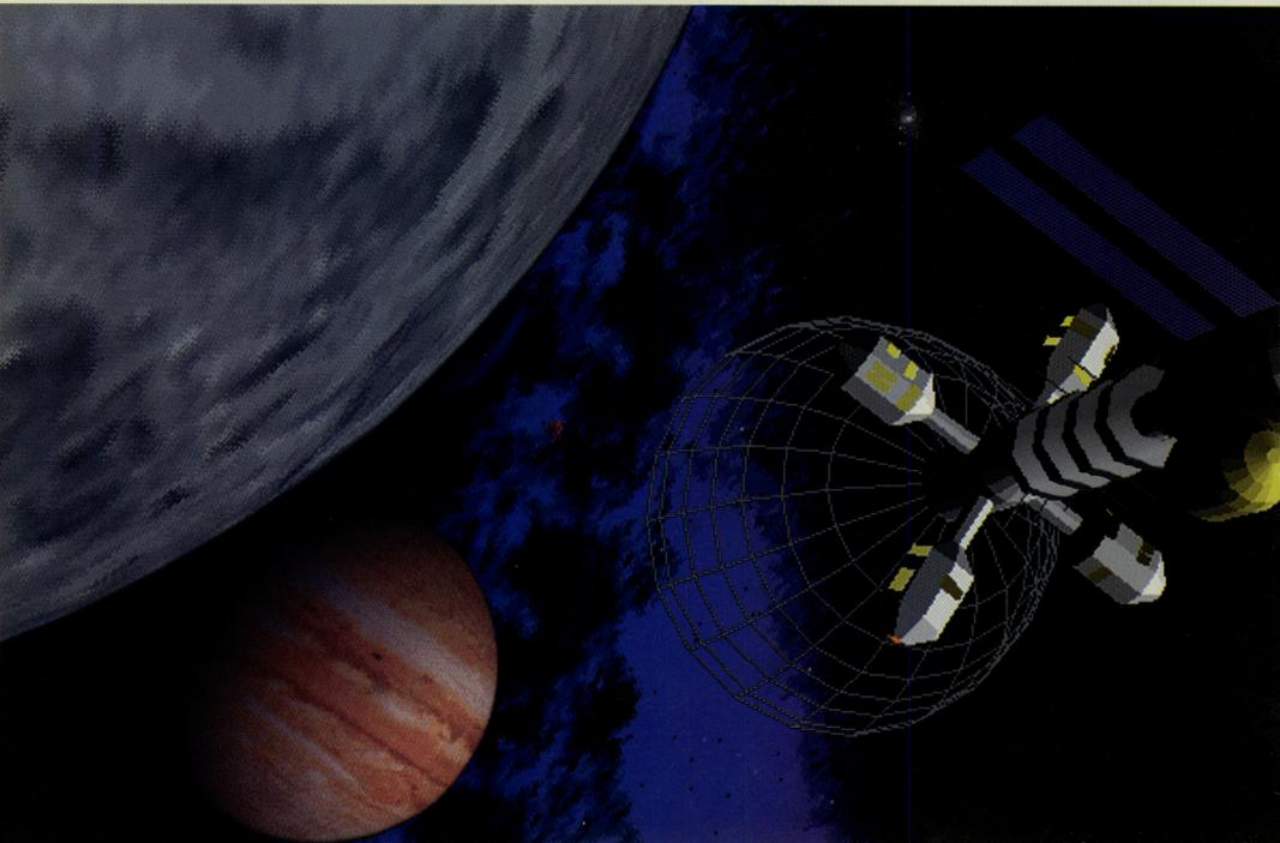
Second, Game Over, other editorial

letters: Heck, I'd like to see the game over for the fifteenth level of the Wing Commander Academy gauntlet. My five-year-old daughter likes to help me when I try to play, and with the mouse (and the semi-random autofire problem), we only get about half way there, blowing it around level eight or nine. Indeed, for most games, I'd be curious.

Wing Commander II was nice in having a plot, but it had its down points too, in comparison to its roots. To begin with, if your group of gamers was competitive, you did not have the various medals, promotions and such to use for comparison. Next, unlike Wing Commander, the hinge points that resulted in missions being lost or won were often foolishly chosen (in fact, with some of them it was impossible to lose the mission unless you actively went out of your way to do so).

X-Wing left me cold. I watched friends play but did not engage enough interest to buy one to install on my machine (vs. the multiple copies of Wing Commander I bought). Part of it has to do with mission plotting. Part with the nature of the ships and the balance of the simulation.

I think those comparisons are fair and that you are doing a good job in making them. Since we live in the present and



not the past, games should be compared using current values, and the new Wing Commander Supreme gets compared the same way on 3D0—on current values.

I'm curious to see how Privateer and Righteous Fire compare over the long run. For 1993, I'd put Privateer over X-Wing. But then, I'd put WC over WCII, so my preferences are obviously different. Plotting of the encounters (vs. game plot) is important to me, but can be repetitious (which makes it difficult to use some of the best methods too often).

Third, reviews: Liked the Doom review. You missed mentioning the variable difficulty levels. On "easy" it really is easy. I'm looking forward to the Barney patch.

The Gabriel Knight review pointed out things other reviewers had missed.

RPG Review did a nice job on an important topic. Computer RPG games are destroying the others. The computer tends to always be available for play, rarely cheats and often has better plotting and settings. The unending nature (with supplements, too!) really helps.

I would like to see game designer names. We all know Chris Roberts, but what about Scott Bennie, Sandy Petersen or Law Schick?

Final note, equipment: A number of

reviews, in your magazine and others, have rated game play and "punchiness" based on raw processor strength.

My experience has been that video card performance, once you are into 486 machines, is more important. E.G., Privateer is kind of slow even on some 486DX2/66's. However, it snaps right along on a good 486SX/25 with 32-Bit local bus and lots of RAM.

You might want to mention that when detailing what system resources are necessary for a game.

Stephen Marsh
Wichita Falls, TX

Whew! Long letter, but a good read and an informative one. Glad you like the magazine, Stephen.

I've received a couple of letters on the whole glitch/bug topic, and you've come the closest to my opinion. I do not think that game designers should be derided for having a few quirks (as you call them) in their games, and yet a lot of the consumers get up in arms when their games aren't "perfect." Glitches are annoying. For example, we found a glitch with the streets in SimCity 2000 that can be easily worked around (don't build bridges, don't allocate money for bridges). Annoying, but the game is still

playable. Bugs are intolerable, frustrating and bad news all around. There is no excuse for a bug that causes a game to crash.

As reported earlier, the jury is still out on the reinstatement or permanent removal of the Game Over section. Concerning the best games of 1993, my favorite was X-Wing, followed closely by SSG's Warlords 2 with Privateer coming in third. For the record, X-Wing made Kevin's top ten list at number 5 while Ted had X-Wing and Privateer ranked 7th and 8th respectively. Obviously, opinions differ, and judging by our letters column for the past year, the WC II/X-Wing debate is not only furious, it shows no sign of stopping in the near future. Can't wait for TIE Fighter to add some fuel to this one.

Thanks for the kind words concerning the reviews. That's the reason we have more than one person look at each game—it gives us a different perspective on each title.

Your comment regarding processor speed and video card performance is a good one. We try to test games out on multiple configurations, and while there are too many different possibilities to try everything out, we do attempt to locate the differences from system to system.

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more real, you'd be
drinking Tang.**

New Microsoft® Space Simulator is so authentic, even astronauts are asking for it. Select your spacecraft from our fleet and blast off. Once in space, command your ship in our free-flight mode. Explore the fiery red canyons of Mars, or the explosion of a supernova, all based on actual satellite data. It's just one of the realistic simulations we have waiting for you to take control. To get off the ground, shuttle over to your reseller and pick it up.



UPGRADING...

Dear CGR:

To begin with, I offer you salutations on your most excellent magazine. I thoroughly enjoy every page. I wish I had a subscription, but my girlfriend won't let me, so I have to sneak them past her so she doesn't know that I bought a new magazine. She wants a craft magazine subscription (yech!). I do have one complaint, though. In your March issue, the advertisement for IndyCar Racing (which looked good) spread black ink over my hands. It is not the first time that this has happened, and it only happens with the pages that are mostly black. It is only mildly irritating and does not detract from my enjoyment.

I am writing because I have a few questions of you. I am currently using a basic 286 computer (pretty scary, huh?). I am looking to get a new one, but am intimidated by the large selection to choose from, and I am not very computer-literate (I play games). I also want a computer that will last me a number of years without the need to upgrade. I have been reading a number of magazines on what the system requirements should be for a computer these days, and I would appreciate your input on what I found. A 486DX2/66 with 16MB RAM and a 250 MB (or higher) hard drive with a fast access time. A non-interlaced monitor supporting VESA standard modes. A video card supporting VL-BUS. A double-speed CD-ROM drive with an access time under 300ms that should be photo-CD compatible. The CD drive should have an 8-note synthesizer with MIDI playback. A 16-Bit Sound Blaster 16 ASP. A Roland MA-12 self-powered speaker system or self-powered studio speakers. ThrustMaster joystick controller card and the Mark II WCS and FCS with rudder pedals.

Also, are there any actuarial programs out there? My girlfriend is an actuary student and will work on actuary stuff when she is done, and I want something for her on my computer (other than Tetris).

Also, why are all the sea battle strategic games only about WWII? Why not battles like the Battle of the Chesapeake, Battle of Saintes, Battle of the Nile or even the Battle of Trafalgar. These are classic battles and should not be ignored.

One more thing. Your review of Romance of the Three Kingdoms III was very good. I waited a long time for the game to come out, and when I finally got it, it would not run on my computer

(hence the upgrade). Kevin said he had problems with all the Lui Bei's and Lui Bao's. There is an easy solution to this. Write down all your characters, their abilities and write down the province they are in. One way to win battles is to ONLY take characters into battle with a war ability of 80+. Make sure your holdings are doing well, giving you money and food. The people MUST be happy. Another technique is to create a ruler and make the war ability 100, ignoring the other abilities. This makes YOU the most powerful figure in the game. Don't go into battle unless your generals and men are fully trained and equipped, and never go into battle with a general with a low loyalty level. Save before you go into battle, so if something goes wrong, you can reboot. These tactics worked for me with the other two Romance games and might not apply to the third one, as I have not had a chance to play it yet.

Brad McGraw
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Why not get a subscription to both magazines?

Regarding your upgrade suggestions, the items you have selected would make any computer guru's head explode with the sheer delight of owning such a system. I hope you have pockets deep enough to afford all of it, since you are talking some serious coin. Also, speaking personally, my favorite joystick is a relatively inexpensive one called the Mach 1 from CH Products, although the ThrustMaster products are excellent. Your hard drive should be more in the 340 Meg range with an access time under 13ms, especially if you want to run Windows. Next month, we will be talking about the Kelvin 64 VL-BUS card from Orchid Technologies. Stay tuned on that one. If you have the money, there are triple-speed CD-ROM drives out there. The 8-note synthesizer, etc. will come with a sound card, and the SB 16 ASP is a fine choice, and it will also come with a joystick port. Also, if money is not an object, check out the Roland daughter card in this issue. Jazz Hipster and Altec Lansing also make fine speakers. VESA local bus is a must for any 486. Avoid PCI like the proverbial plague until the technology catches up to it (same with Power PC, just for the record).

The accounting program I use at home is Quicken, and it covers all of my accounting and money needs.

Naval battles have latched onto WWII at the moment, although there is word that Deadly Games (makers of U-Boat

may be working on a Civil War naval simulation.

RESCUE MISSION...

Dear CGR:

I'd like to thank you for your publication of David Harley's letter titled "Strike Two..." in your March issue. Strike Commander is one of my favorite games, but I haven't been able to play it at the optimum level I've wanted. I own a 486DX/33 with 8MB and an Edge 1MB VRAM video card. The card is a Windows accelerator, and all this time (last two years), I've never known that this would be at the cost of my DOS graphics. I was even considering purchasing a 2MB Windows accelerator card because I do experience "Pauses and some incremented movement" while playing Strike Commander, unlike David.

David's advice on "balanced throughput" brought me to my senses (I'm sure I'm not the only one). It's nice to see that every now and then there's someone out there who sees a misconception and is kind enough to let everyone know. You've saved me from making a very expensive mistake. I'm now on the way toward purchasing a Diamond Speedstart 24X DOS card instead. Thank you one again on your helpful advice, David, and thank you, CGR for publishing his letter, or I (and probably many others) would remain ignorant of the facts.

Anthony Wong
LeMoore, CA

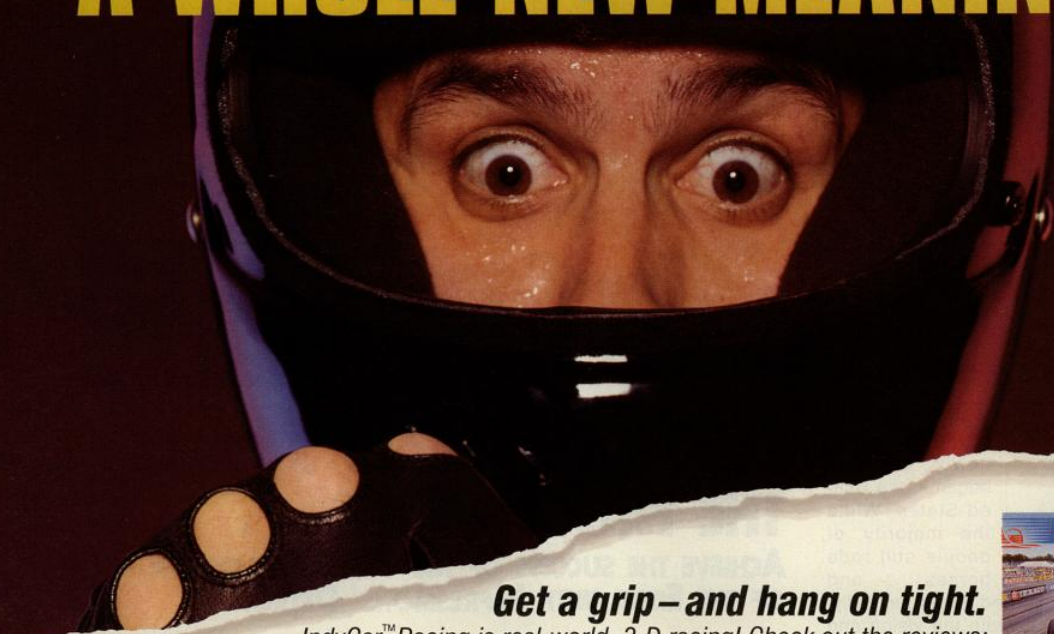
That's what we're here for. We printed David's letter because it seemed to offer a sensible solution for what could be a common problem. Glad we could help out, and thanks, David, for the assist.

CHANGES...

It has come to our attention that a couple of changes in CGR were needed. First of all, the Preview section will be going back to the style it had before we switched our look in January. Look on page 78 for your first glimpse at this new style.

It also happens that the hardware section of Computer Game Review is now being handled exclusively by reviewer Ted Chapman. This is mainly due to the fact that of any of us, Ted has the most experience with hardware installation and set up. As such, he is the most informed opinion here regarding hardware, so the section has been altered to reflect this. Thanks for reading along.

HARD DRIVE TAKES ON A WHOLE NEW MEANING.



Get a grip—and hang on tight.

IndyCar™ Racing is real-world, 3-D racing! Check out the reviews:

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"Fast, furious, brilliant"— PC Gamer. **"Nirvana for car racing fans"**— Game Bytes.



The feel. It's almost too real. Scream down the straight. Crest a hill and your stomach's in your throat. Corner too fast and it's panic. Brake? Gas? Flick the wheel? If you have to think, you're toast.

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Add on 7 new tracks. With our **IndyCar Circuits: Expansion Pack**, you can race at seven new tracks— from Phoenix to Mid-Ohio, Detroit to Queensland, Australia— the challenge always stays fresh!

Each track has been painstakingly constructed to match the true dimensions of the actual speedway.



And now, Indy, too! Our engineers have mastered the feel and thrill of "The Brickyard™"— so you can, too— with our new **Indianapolis Motor Speedway: Expansion Pack**. Plus, with this add-on package, you get a Customizing Paint Kit— to update colors and decals, or just do your car your way.

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**Now,
New Expansion Packs:
IndyCar™ Circuits, plus
The Indianapolis Motor Speedway!**



Around the turn of the century, a new industry began in the United States. While the majority of people still rode horses and

thought that mankind would never fly, there were those with the vision and foresight to see a world where people went from place to place not on the backs of animals, but on the backs of machines. These were the people that started the automotive industry, touching off a love affair the American populace

Detroit by Impressions

Game Summary

Design and build your own lines of automobiles and sell them to the world. Add features, develop new ideas and either make scads of money or lose your shirt.

**Overall
Rating:**

93%

Requirements: VGA, 640K RAM,
286 or better (386/16 rec.)
Sound Support: Most major sound cards

Controller: Mouse, Keyboard
Available for: PC, Amiga
Designed by: Impressions
Distributed by: Impressions
Retail Price: \$59.95
Hard Drive Space: 6.5 Meg
No. of Players: 1-4 players

FIND OUT WHY IT'S CALLED THE MOTOR CITY...

**ACHIEVE THE SUCCESS OF THE VW BEETLE OR THE PAIN
OF THE EDEL WITH IMPRESSIONS' DETROIT.**



Your factory will be your new home away from home. Take care of it.

has had with their cars ever since. Detroit from Impressions enables you to start your own automotive company in a number of world markets. You market against three foes, which can be either computer controlled or played by other human beings.

Your company opens its doors in the year 1908, when the world of automotive mechanics was still fledgeling. You begin with one car design, no luxury items or amenities in your car design, some money in the bank and a dream. You also begin in the territory of your choosing with one sales office and one factory.

From this inauspicious beginning, you must build an automotive empire. Hire people to research engines, body design, luxury items, suspension, brakes and more. Bring on more staff to increase the number of cars rolling off your production line, or fire them if you start building up a surplus. As new items are invented by your research team, you can develop entirely new lines of cars or go back to your older designs and retrofit new parts into old vehicles.

For faster production, you can retool your factories to allow more workers to work on each assembly line without getting in each other's way.



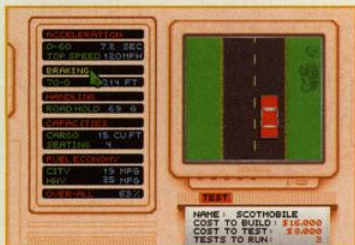
Where you put your advertising is as important as how much you spend on it.



A new car design can make you a ton of cash if you find the public's need at the right time.

The game follows the actual economic and historical time of 1908 to the present (although the years of 1994 to 2008 are obviously speculation), so you will experience the decline in market associated with wars followed by a relative boom in the post-war years. Watch out for those dangerous years of the 1930's!

To assist you in making the right decisions, you have access to virtually every piece of information you could want. Check out market research before expanding into a new territory, look at the reviews of your cars as well as those of your competitors and use price com-



Test out new vehicle designs to make sure you know what you have before you sell it.

parisons to help you undercut your rivals. Expand into new world markets as well as new car markets as you create the world's first sports car or pick-up truck.

At this time, modem play has not been included in Detroit, those who desire it will be able to get it from Impressions for free when it becomes available.



Open up new markets before your competition can cash in on car-starved people everywhere.

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
88 • 89 • 80 • 80 • 93

Detroit is that dangerous type of game that swallows the souls of gamers for long periods of time. It combines the mounting ego power of an excellent builder with the just-one-more-turn obsession of the best sims. Detroit is neither builder nor sim; it's bottom-line oriented enough to keep it out of the builder category, and arbitrary and stylized enough to wrest free of the sim label. Logistical strategy combines with creativity to form a game that will enthrall anyone who likes to think instead of shoot when playing a game. That said, it's hardly a perfect game; but the faults I find are faults of omission, not commission. Detroit makes me want so much more, simply because of the

originality of the design. I wish I could be asked to help with the war effort, instead of losing sales to the depressed economy. I want more public feedback; after all, cars are an integral part of American culture. Instead of always reading market reports, I'd love to read a letter from a buyer, whether satisfied or no. One minor quibble is that the hot spots for the mouse are not quite large enough on many screens. Also, the game is, frankly, pretty easy. You have plenty of latitude for experimentation without losing your shirt. Detroit is a framework for building your own ideas, so play is limited pretty much only by your interest in it. If you've ever gotten lost in a sim or engrossed in a builder, find Detroit immediately. **-Kevin**

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
98 • 98 • 85 • 93 • 98

Okay, okay, okay; I was wrong! I freely admit that when I saw this game at CES in January, I had a hard time thinking that it was going to be any good. **I WAS WRONG!** This game is so good that it's all I could do to rip myself away from the keyboard for the five minutes it took to compose this review. Structurally, the game is flawless. The interface is incredibly well-designed; you can literally cross-reference anything. Even though the graphics are sort of static and bland, who cares?! Detroit is so entertaining that I hardly even notice the graphics anymore. Sound effects are minimal, but the music is tremendously entertaining (Kevin shut it off and I told him to turn it back on).

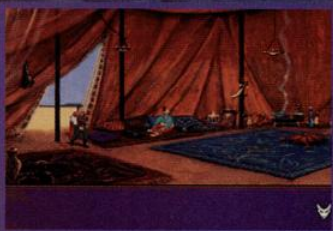
Some of the things I like, besides the basics: 1)The historical aspects are wonderful; don't get caught with your pants down or your money in the bank on Black Friday. World Wars are a pesky lot, too. 2)Car design and testing is boatloads of fun; you can build the world's most ungainly machine and put it on the road. 3)The level of detail is occasionally maddening, like when you forget to open up any supply lines or markets for a new and expensive car. Nevertheless, it's an excellent touch. 4)The sheer number of reports that are automatically generated for you at the end of each month is nearly overwhelming, but you quickly come to terms with it (or go bankrupt from ignorance). May the Fords be with you. **-Ted**

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
89 • 81 • 80 • 89 • 95

I've wanted this game since I first saw the initial ideas a year ago. Now, here it is and it's lived up to virtually all of its promise. Detroit is an entertaining economic simulation that goes beyond the realm of mere game and becomes all-encompassing. This is a game to play for hours on end, to get lost in for days, to laugh and cry over when things go well or poorly. You live or die with the decisions you make at every level of the company. I, for instance, was doing well overall until I retooled my factories to produce more cars so I could open a new sales office. I misrouted one line of cars however, and found them undersold in one area where they had been incredibly popular. A detri-

ment to the game is that the computer opponents aren't that bright, especially at the mid to lower levels. For instance, after demonstrating a definite market for sports cars, the computer companies wait for years to market their own line. When played with multiple human opponents, Detroit really shines. More detailed market research would be handy as would the ability to see what the research people are working on, or at least to have that option. The keyboard interface is a little difficult, while the mouse can be tough to work into the small hotspot areas on occasion. Don't let these problems deter you. They are minor when compared with the overall scope of the product and the quality contained therein. **-Steve**

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From far, far away and long long ago comes a story to savor: a tale of courage, romance, sorcery, evil deeds and malevolent curses; a tale to lift the heart and strike at the senses.

Your kingdom has suffered hard at the hands of the Sorcerer Sanwe. But it is 20 years since he and his dread castle were sealed within a magical force by the court wizard of your father; the then king.

Now, the dragon representing the evil mage is stirring and the sphere that holds him is cracking open. The Sorcerer has reawakened! Your quest is clear: fight your way to the castle and defeat Sanwe!

DRAGONSPIHERE

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THOSE PIECES ARE STARTING TO STACK UP...

TETRIS ACTION MEETS ZEN PHILOSOPHY IN QQP'S LATEST PUZZLER, ORIGAMO.

Explore the world of Origamo, and you may find that you can never leave. You must trace your way through a maze of rooms. At each of the rooms, you will need to solve at least one puzzle. Fail, and you lose points. Succeed and your admittance to the room is granted.

To leave the maze, you must accomplish tasks for some of the denizens therein. Once you have been given access to a room, you can cross it freely, which is good, since you will find yourself wandering through the maze looking for the next room you must get to.

In each room, you have your choice of playing one of three puzzles. In each puzzle, a pattern of grey tiles will appear



You must eventually travel to every room in the maze. Plan your path.

Origamo by Quantum Quality

Game Summary

Fit rows of pieces into larger shapes to complete the designs. Play on a variety of difficulty levels to increase the challenge. Go numb staring at your screen for hours.

Overall Rating: 82%

Requirements: 640L, SVGA, 386 or better

Sound Support: All major sound cards

Controller: Mouse

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: Destiny Software

Distributed by: Quantum Quality

Retail Price: \$49.95

Hard Drive Space: 6 Meg

No. of Players: One player



Peaceful backgrounds and music contrast with the rapid pace of game play.

on the screen. Pieces that must be placed into the pattern come down a conveyor belt at the bottom of the screen. Use the mouse to grab a piece and rotate it to its desired position, then place it where you'd like it to go. If the conveyor belt fills up, you lose that puzzle and must return to where you came from. To help you, often the grey tiles have several different patterns on them. Cover all of the grey tiles containing the same pattern and the conveyor belt will clear. Additionally, you can toss pieces one at a time into the dump. Those pieces do recycle, but placing them in the dump can clear needed space from your conveyor belt!

While you only need to complete one puzzle to get through a room, to get a really high score, you'll want to try to complete two or even all three in each room. Losing a puzzle means losing points, though, so choose wisely.

Origamo features a huge number of puzzles as well as varying strategies for each one. On the hardest level, you can only lose three puzzles in the entire game! Play carefully.



This puzzle might look simple, but the conveyor belt moves quickly; you must, too.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
82	80	73	81	83

Normally, I dislike puzzle games. I dislike puzzle games with a time element, where I'm rushed, even more. Origamo, however, is fresh enough to grudgingly earn respect from me, even if my overall reaction is more of frustration than fascination. The music is calm and soothing, even if the action isn't. Had more (or all) of the puzzles been occasions for contemplation rather than nervous reaction, I could have played this game for hours on end. Arbitrariness also plays a heavier hand than I would like. Don't get me wrong: there are plenty of people who could fall headlong into this and not come up for air for days. It should carry a warning label for ex-Tetris freaks.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
84	92	87	86	94

Unusual. Weird. Strange. Annoying. Stress-inducing. These words are not intended to be taken as equivalent to bad. Quite the opposite. Origamo is incredibly addictive; the puzzles are sometimes easy, but mostly tough. Just my kind of logic puzzler. If you've seen Lucky's Casino Adventure, you can already imagine what the graphics are like; both games were designed by the same group of folks. Sound is mainly bleep-bloop, but the music is very good (read: pleasant and not too distracting). The interface is okay, but I would prefer a bit finer mouse pointer; I couldn't always get the piece I wanted on the first try. Definitely a game you'll want to leave on your hard drive.

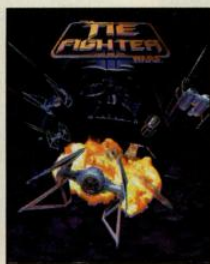
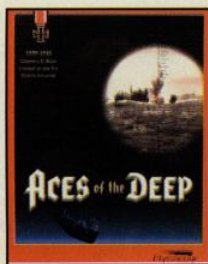
-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
84	77	78	89	87

In spite of its name, Origamo has nothing to do with Japanese paper folding. It's similar to Chinese tangram puzzles. Origamo is enticing with its simplicity; place the pieces correctly and move to the next puzzle, but a wrong move can absolutely kill you. The puzzle difficulty levels are also excellent. Some don't look hard, but the conveyor belt moves at lightning speed. The music is pretty soothing, which is interesting for a game that plays this frenetically. Graphics are cartoony, not bad but not great. The game is similar in a lot of ways to QQP's Solitaire's Journey. Mouse control could be tightened a bit—it's sometimes hard to grab the correct piece.

-Steve

There are those who are Titans and those who are not



June's Top Titles:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
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DRIVE THE FRENCH ACROSS EUROPE AND OFF A CLIFF.

COMMAND NAPOLEON'S FORCES IN HIS FINAL CAMPAIGN AND SEE IF YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN HISTORY.

In 1815, the disgraced and imprisoned Napoleon escaped from exile on the small isle of Elba. The short but fiery general returned to France, news of his return spreading before him. By the time he reached Paris, he was no longer France's exiled hero; he returned in triumph. His disbanded armies took up arms and flocked to his side. The defeated ruler of Europe was, once again, Emperor of France.

The Allies were startled into action. The Duke of Wellington commanded the Anglo-Allied army, based in Belgium. Even though his army matched Napoleon's in size, he knew he could never compete with the Sicilian's military genius or the fanatic fervor of his loyal



A quick glance at the Waterloo Campaign Database shows the French chain of command.

Fields of Glory by Spectrum HoloByte

Game Summary

Point-and-click your way through Napoleonic warfare. Command Napoleon out of exile all the way to Waterloo, or command forces that oppose him. Kill men and horses.

Overall Rating: 89%

Requirements:	2 Meg RAM, VGA Hard Drive, Mouse
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster or compatibles
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	MicroProse
Distributed by:	Spectrum HoloByte
Retail Price:	\$30.00
Hard Drive Space:	15 Meg
No. of Players:	One player



Watch the French engage the Prussians from this vantage point. Order troops in combat.

troops. Wellington had to combine with the Prussians under Blücher's command to have a chance at containing Napoleon again. Knowing this, Napoleon moved his troops north to drive a wedge between the two armies. Thus were the battle lines drawn for the Waterloo Campaign, which history tells us ends with the final defeat of the famed Emperor of France.

Spectrum HoloByte makes history a little more malleable with *Fields of Glory*. The player can command the Anglo-Allied, the Prussian or the French armies in a bid to free Napoleon or trap him more mightily. Command these forces at army, corps, division or battalion levels. You can keep a bird's eye view of the battle or watch the fighting from a man-to-man perspective in a real-time point-and-click environment.

Players also have the comprehensive full-color Waterloo Campaign Database, which allows them even in the heat of battle to check on the status of their troops, the personalities and biographies of their commanders and even those of the enemy.



At the closest view, watch casualties float in the river and the damage done to the towns.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	89	92	79	72

Napoleonic warfare is not my wargaming metier, but it's hard to argue with a game as pretty and detailed as *FoG*. I love a game that lets me watch my cavalry fall off their horses after an artillery strike. I must also dispose of my normal distaste for real-time wargames, as the combat occurs so very, very slowly that I was never lost. Unfortunately, *FoG* is shackled to history just a little too much. They do allow non-historical setups and a few fictional battles, but being able to control Napoleon's whole campaign rather than a few battles would have been very nice. *FoG* is an excellent introduction for people who know little about Napoleonic warfare.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
88	92	89	88	94

One of the best acronyms we've seen this year, *FoG* is a winner in my book. Despite having virtually no interest in things French, and having been forced to read Hugo's *Les Misérables* in college, I found this game quite enjoyable. The maps are reasonably accurate, and having two non-historical what-if scenarios helps to round out the game play. Being able to zoom in and out added perspective: you get to watch your troops engage their enemy in close quarters. This game also boasts a big bonus in price; you can't go far wrong for thirty bucks. The only thing this game doesn't have is control of individual soldiers, and thank the lord for that.

-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
87	91	80	82	90

Ever since I got into computer gaming, I've had a fondness for real-time military simulations. While I can't admit that my knowledge of this era is very good, or that my interest is particularly high in these battles, I was really entertained. Control is easy enough to learn without the manual. I really enjoy watching the little soldiers run around on the screen and get dusted by my troops. This one is good in a lot of ways; you can take it seriously and enjoy the strategies, or you can just have fun and watch little dudes get obliterated by cannon fire. You also can't complain about the \$30 MSRP. I'd like to see this series continue with other historical eras.

-Steve

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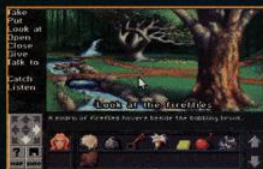
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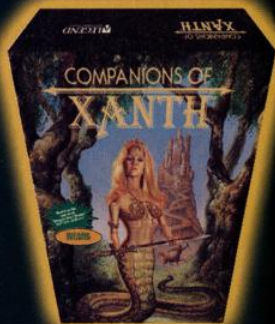


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Actual VGA graphics shown. Distributed by Accolade, Inc.



FORMGEN TAKES THE PLUNGE INTO RPGs.

DISCIPLES OF STEEL PITS YOU AGAINST THE MONSTERS IN A BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF LANATHOR.

Another long day has past and the twilight hour has come. You sit upon your stepfather's old chair, keeping close to the fire to ward off the midnight chill. With long, even strokes, you polish your blade in a slow soothing rhythm. As a soldier for hire, your days are forever hard ones.

A crack of thunder and flash of lightning fill the night sky. The beginning splatters of rain strike upon the tin roof overhead as clouds race to cover the full moon. In the climax of the storm, you hear footsteps upon your porch. You are unalarmed, for the traveler is obviously an old woman.

She remains just outside the door and in the dim light of the fire you catch a



Doris is injured, but not badly. Damage is allocated by body area, as are critical hits.

Disciples of Steel

by FormGen

Game Summary

The disappearance of your father has left Lanathor without a ruler. Save your land and your family honor by re-establishing the power of the once-mighty guilds.

Overall Rating:

76%

Requirements: 386, VGA, 2MB RAM

Sound Support: Sound Blaster

Controller: Keyboard, mouse

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: Megasoft

Distributed by: FormGen

Retail Price: \$49.95

Hard Drive Space: 6.5 Meg

No. of Players: One player



The party attacks giant bats. Move all eight characters in detailed tactical combat.

glimpse of her face. She may once have been only old; now she is ancient. She examines you briefly and, for some reason, appears to find you satisfactory as she nods her head in acceptance. Finally she speaks, her voice both cryptic and clear...

"Terine, the great goddess of all that is hath given mine eyes to see that which has not yet been, and what I have seen, I pray that I had not... The time of darkness has come once again to Lanathor. Evil is upon our land." She points a crooked finger at you and her voice rises above the thunder. "You, and those like you, have been chosen. You must triumph where your ancestors have fallen!"

Sensing your skepticism, the hag speaks: "Proof is what you want and I cannot give. Only I can show you what is to come. You must decide your own fate."

She stretches out her hand and a glowing orb begins to form itself from thin air. "Behold!" she shrieks. You can no longer deny what it is that your eyes perceive.

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Characters can improve themselves in more than twenty skills, plus their statistics.

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value

80 75 76 70 59

Disciples of Steel is a B-grade knock-off of the Gold Box AD&D series by SSI. If you harbor, as I do, pleasant memories of these games, you're likely to enjoy DoS at a base level. It's a resurgence of many things that the industry has left behind: multi-character parties of adventurers, tactical sword & sorcery combat scenes, etc. Most of these things I am still addicted to, and wish were not disappearing. DoS fails in not bringing these elements into the computing present. In other words, if this were 1989, you'd still think DoS was a poor man's Pool of Radiance. It has a nostalgic charm that saves it from oblivion, but that's it. Get it from the discount shelves.

-Kevin

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value

68 72 72 78 50

FormGen's first attempt at an RPG is not bad for a first try, but not something I'd be willing to lay out my cash for. The interface seems fairly arbitrary, as though the designers didn't bother setting up a model first; it feels like a hash job. Combat is not incredibly difficult to manage, although the way you have to lay out your characters in a "fighting square" seems archaic; why not simply have your leaders start out nearest to the action? Despite the need for VGA, the graphics feel a lot like 16-color EGA. Sound is okay, but by no means stellar. Game play feels a lot like the first breed of graphical RPGs from way back in the mid-80s. Close, but no cigar.

-Ted

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value

80 83 68 76 47

Disciples of Steel is, in no uncertain terms, a direct knock off of the SSI series of AD&D games that came out in a seemingly unending stream. The difference is that when SSI did them, they were state of the art. Now, the technology is old, and DoS shows the age of its design. It isn't bad by any means; it's simply archaic. It has things about it I like. I enjoy third-person RPGs since I think they come closer to the pen-and-paper experience than first-person. I like multi-character parties. However, I also like to see companies take advantage of current (or innovative) ideas in interface design and overall game play. DoS has charm, but ultimately little muscle.

-Steve

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In the arcade mode, you earn points for passing cars and lose points for getting passed.

Formula One by Domark

Game Summary

Race your way to victory in the FIA Formula 1 World Championship. All twelve tracks on the circuit are included, as well as actual driver/team combinations.

**Overall
Rating: 79%**

Requirements:	386-16, VGA, DOS 5.0
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster, AdLib
Controller:	Keyboard, mouse, joystick
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Domark
Distributed by:	Domark
Retail Price:	\$29.95
Hard Drive Space:	3 Meg
No. of Players:	One player



Choose the options you want, then strap into your car and get ready to race.

in" wing adjustment and tire style to maximize performance on each track for a performance so real you may forget to make a pit stop.

Kick out the jams as you scream past the grandstand at 200 miles per hour. And if that's not fast enough for you, check out the Turbo Mode—spike the afterburners and thrill the crowds as you glide past them at an effortless 220 MPH!

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***Addendum note to those who have already bought the game: in order to play in any mode other than arcade, hit the <ALT> key in order to select a track, then <ENTER>.



Be extra careful when entering a tunnel while attempting to pass another car.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
80	83	86	70	71

It's not a good sign when a bug shorts out sound on a game and you're actually glad about it. F1 is an arcade, racing-like game, whose main attraction may well be the prodigious leaping capabilities of the cars involved. This produced in me a great desire to play Bump N' Jump, but not a desire to continue my experience with this game. Racing sims (of which class F1 is a reluctant member) have always seemed to me to be about as interesting as driving around in circles anyway, and it's difficult to recommend F1 as anything other than an attempt to revive the Pole Position craze on a PC near you. There are several play options, but that's splitting hairs.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	88	84	82	85

As an arcade racer, Formula 1 is not bad. Domark makes no pretensions about what this game is; you don't have to do anything other than select slow, medium or fast gear ratios and tires, then race. Control is excruciatingly simple, and keyboard control is best. That you can take even sharp corners at full speed precludes this from the genre of serious racing. An intermittent sound bug didn't truly detract from the game, but it's something of which game buyers should be aware. Should you enjoy arcade style racing games (such as Outrun or Pole Position), Formula 1 will probably tweak all the right buttons. If you want serious racing (like Indycar or World Circuit) avoid.

-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
89	88	87	68	90

The straight dope on this game is that if you are at all a fan of serious racing simulations, you will categorically not find that in Formula One by Domark. It's non-serious nature is evidenced by the simple control, lack of options when customizing your vehicle and ability to slam into walls at 150mph without scratching your high-gloss paint job. You will find something as engaging as Monaco GP or Pole Position, though. It's a nice bonus that there are a number of tracks to race on. The arcade and championship modes are similar, although the championship mode is a bit more involved. For a harmless and enjoyable romp, the arcade mode's hard to beat.

-Steve

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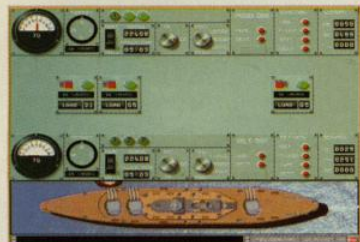
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Build your forces from 100 ship types and 20 plane types as you engage enemy forces on land, at sea, and in the air. Sophisticated command and control features let you give the computer responsibility for the details while you make the big decisions. Or you can micromanage every detail—right down to the targeting of individual guns!



The main guns of a U.S. Battleship track an IJN warship. All settings are changeable.

Great Naval Battles 2

by SSI

Game Summary

Defeat the Japanese forces at Guadalcanal through the use of strategically applied force. Make them pay in blood for the lives lost at Pearl Harbor.

Overall Rating: 81%

Requirements: 386-33, SVGA, DOS 5.0, 4MB RAM

Sound Support: Sound Blaster, AdLib, Roland

Controller: Keyboard/mouse

Available for: PC and compatibles

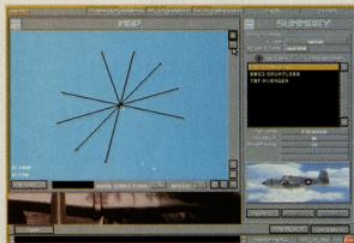
Designed by: SSI

Distributed by: SSI

Retail Price: \$69.95

Hard Drive Space: 14 Meg

No. of Players: One player



The Enterprise watches her search planes return, preparing to launch a strike.

Great Naval Battles II's stellar list of features includes an all-new interface that makes playing a real breeze. Fully animated real-time damage control screens. Top Down viewing for that critically important strategic viewpoint. Aircraft operations that let you view real-time action from the cockpit as well as the helm. Night combat missions with fog and star shell options. Game screens that use actual digitized World War II photographs as backgrounds. There's even a special VCR function that lets you record and play back your battles—to see what went wrong or to savor what went well.

Your campaign against the Japanese begins two months after their catastrophic loss at the Battle of Midway. Though the Americans considered Midway to be the turning point in the war, the Japanese saw Guadalcanal as their turning point. It was during the American effort to take over the Solomon Islands and surrounding environs in the South Pacific that the Japanese moved from an offensive to defensive position in the war. Can you make history repeat itself?



Detailed damage reports let you discover at a glance exactly what's affecting the ship.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
92	76	84	80	80

SSI has crafted an interface that is a little too perfect. The computer is capable of both micromanaging and macromanaging just about everything about your ships during the battles. The computer also apparently excels at figuring out just what the heck was going on, as this was a very trying task for me. It's a joy that the computer can handle things so well, but let me get a good spatial idea of things. The maps are nice, but it's hard to mesh what the maps, say, with the rest of the screens. GNB2 is lavish with detail, but I have difficulty putting myself into the situations because I'm a little unsure of what's going on. Serious WWII naval enthusiasts, take a look.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	89	89	89	92

This one's sure to be a big hit among tactical wargamers. For myself, I think it is a little too static. Mind you, static games can be fun, but they need to have atmosphere to enhance the feeling of realism. This simply feels like a clinical wargame experience, complete with soothing music. I liked the graphics a lot; they are very crisp and clean. The interface is easy to get into, but I recommend playing through the introductory scenarios before taking on any major missions. If you don't, prepare to lose on a fairly regular basis. The music, as I've said, is of the soothing variety; I recommend turning this option off. Sound effects are excellent, but limited.

-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	90	87	76	90

It's nice to see that SSI has cleaned up the interface from the original GNB a little bit for this sequel. This game is very playable, and it took me all of a couple of minutes to figure out what I was doing. Too bad that the game is also incredibly sterile. You click on things and guns shoot, ships turn, damage gets repaired. There's not much sense of actually being on a warship. For some unexplained reason, there's also goofy music that fades in and out. These tunes are nice but are totally inappropriate for the game. Just about everyone could learn interface hints from this game. Of course, GNB2 could learn atmosphere hints from just about everyone else. Close, no tamale.

-Steve



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THINGS GET EERIE WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN...

TERROR AWAITS THE INCAUTIOUS TRAVELLER IN RAVENLOFT: STRAHD'S POSSESSION...

Cordial greetings from Strahd, Count von Zarovich, Lord of Barovia:

For many travelers I have contempt, entering Barovia as they do in timid apprehension of her wonders. They are neither prepared for life high in the Balinoks nor ready to accept its dangers. Here, the peaks of Baratak and Ghakis stand in cloaks of granite, their cowls of snow pulled securely about them as if they alone might endure the night.

However, your party intrigues me. I am certain our woods, streams and caverns will attract your interest, offering many a delightful diversion. Even the otherwise abysmal village of Barovia boasts a charming cemetery. You must visit it. Perhaps, if your party survives... that is,



Rich cinematic scenes liven up the game play and draw you into the story.

Ravenloft by SSI

Game Summary

Using only wits and weapons, defeat the malevolent and nefarious Count Strahd von Zarovich. Gothic horror rules the night in this RPG in the classic vein from SSI.

**Overall
Rating:**

82%

Requirements:	386, VGA, DOS 5.0, 4MB RAM
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster, Roland, Orchid
Controller:	Keyboard/mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Dreamforge
Distributed by:	SSI
Retail Price:	\$80.00
Hard Drive Space:	21 Meg
No. of Players:	One player



Hold conversations with those more wise in the ways of this land than you.

stays long enough in this harsh and unyielding home of mine, I may require its presence. I shall ask you to join me in Ravenloft, my castle upon the precipice overlooking Barovia.

I give my leave for your party to enjoy our misty, twilight dangers. But heed this warning and do not play at cross-purposes with me. To stand against Strahd is to be at odds with life itself, for he who sends these greetings is the Lord and the Law of this brutal paradise.

(signed) Count Strahd von Zarovich

Experience gothic horror role-playing at its very best in this visually stunning game. Immerse yourself in an eerie gamescape, where subtle yet dramatically effective use of light enhances the atmosphere. Interior and exterior visuals are breathtaking, and animated sequences are exquisitely smooth.

This riveting tale unfolds in an exceptionally large 3-D gaming window. Explore bone-chilling dungeons. Challenge authentic Ravenloft creatures. Cast a multitude of mage and priest spells. Keep track of your progress with printable automaps that allow on-screen notations to be made. Don't get killed.



Use magic and metal to fight off crazed beasts that would like nothing more than you for dinner.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
64	67	87	85	60

I have to admit that Ravenloft was headed into a serious prejudice in my eyes. How could a CRPG hope to capture the deep psychological horror that is central to Ravenloft? Answer: it can't. Dungeon crawling occupies entirely too much of the storyline, and a very frustrating combat system is in use just a bit too often. The designers did manage to capture the despair and frustration of Ravenloft by using an interface that will keep you from playing this game for more than an hour at a time without exploding in rage, fear and confusion. This isn't a bad game, just an overdone one. Some of its ideas will help usher along the next generation of CRPGs, but it doesn't.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
82	88	90	71	40

I had a bit of a problem getting used to Ravenloft's strangely implemented interface, but it became less of a struggle after I had worked with it awhile. The storyline is quite enjoyable, even if it takes itself a bit too seriously. Graphics are crisp, even if the attack sequences seem to take place under the guise of too many double espressos. Sound is something I'm going to have to call Impressionist Minimalist, even though the music is good. Altogether, Ravenloft is a decent enough game, though my mien was strict and reserved when I found out the price (in an unusual marketing strategy, the CD-ROM will cost less). Buy it if you are a hard-core fantasy gamer.

-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
70	62	89	87	33

I had high hopes for Ravenloft. It does have some very innovative features, like an inventory screen that offers you the ability to access every character at the same time. It also offers opponents who run about in the middle of combat like a pack of crazed jackals, making the user turn constantly, swing wildly and hope for a hit. The control scheme leaves much to be desired. The sounds are decent, the graphics attractive. The game also manages a decent amount of atmosphere. Ravenloft is not a bad game, but it is a very disappointing game. This could have been a massive RPG-fest, but it is a game only for reminding yourself of what might have been.

-Steve



Designed to meet your need for speed and control, the Super Warrior is the first available from a new line of IBM compatible game controllers called the Lethal Series by QuickShot.

The Super Warrior is ergonomically designed with four positive response fire buttons, a smooth tracking bio grip, and high speed auto fire capability. And with a built in throttle control for flight simulation games, you'll definitely get that extra thrust you need to take on any enemy.



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Do you have what it takes to rule an empire? You'll need the strategic genius of Alexander the Great, the military ambition of Napoleon, and the political tenacity of Winston Churchill to conquer this world! Ultimate Domain combines sophisticated simulation, role-playing

Ultimate Domain

by The Software Toolworks

Game Summary

Defend king and country against hostile foes while garnering land and resources to use in battle. Technological supremacy can rule the day, or sap you of power and gold.

**Overall
Rating:**

88%

Requirements: 386, VGA, DOS 5.0,
2MB RAM

Sound Support: Sound Blaster

Controller: Mouse

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: Microids

Distributed by: The Software Toolworks

Retail Price: \$59.95

Hard Drive Space: 4.4 Meg

No. of Players: One to three players



You need to keep some people as settlers to raise an army and take over more land.

adventure and warmongering fun to produce one of the most addicting games available.

You have the ultimate power. As the leader of a small band of colonists competing with two rival kingdoms, you will need strategy, innovation and perseverance against the forces of nature and the follies of man in order to thrive. You must decide how your settlers will gather raw materials and allocate scarce resources. In this primitive society, working iron has yet to be invented, the wheel is just a glimmer in the eye of your shaman, and military prowess is game years away. You must design communities, invent tools, build a military empire and defend your kingdom. One mistake,

EVERY KING HAS HIS CASTLE, BUT ONLY ONE CAN RULE.

THE SOFTWARE TOOLWORKS' ULTIMATE DOMAIN PITS YOU AGAINST TWO RIVALS TO BECOME THE ONE TRUE KING.



Take a peek inside your warehouse. Keep a careful eye on the various resources.

one missed opportunity, one rash decision can doom your entire colony.

The decisions are yours. Can you keep up the morale of your colonists during the harsh winter season? Can you trade successfully with neighboring domains? Crush your rivals by growing stronger faster? And what about the mystery of the seven jewels? Do you have what it takes to lead your colonies to victory? You need to make some tough decisions and you need to make them now.

Ultimate Domain has five different worlds to conquer at three different levels of difficulty. Up to three people can play at one time, or fight against the



Place your settlers into jobs that will keep them busy and keep goods and services rolling in.



Your world and welcome to it. In this land, you'll have plenty of wood, but little stone.

computer. Each colonist is detailed through character descriptions incorporating age, occupation, and current morale level; you can enter any building and get a description of what is happening inside. Check on the morale of your colonists often!

One of the unusual features built into Ultimate Domain is the Technology Builder. In order for you to defeat your opponents, you must develop your tech levels faster and sooner than them. Each incremental step brings you closer to designing the tools of war. In order to make a cannon, you must first invent science and crafts, learn how to work with metal, succeed in developing alloys, create bronze from that knowledge, at the same time pursuing the technology to make gunpowder (chemistry and combustibles precede this) and the wheel (which requires knowledge of woodcraft). Once you have put all of these features together, you can then set your blacksmiths working on the invention itself. It is important to keep ahead in more than just the race for the ultimate weapon, though, so you must also develop vaccines to keep your people healthy. Each disease must first be researched to gain an understanding of how it works, this begs development of glass, then the lens, then the microscope; finally, before you can inoculate your populace, you must create the test tube. Technological supremacy is a big part of winning Ultimate Domain, and baby steps are all you can take toward developing the final product.



This world is composed almost entirely of water. Buildings had best be planned carefully.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
82	80	89	76	89

UD goes a long way towards restoring the detail and careful management I have always found missing from these Populous-style games. I love being able to click on a worker and find out how old she is, what she does for a living and how happy she is. On the other hand, there's a level of precision necessary here that I'm not sure is wholly needed, or even fun. You have to be exceedingly careful about where you place your buildings, for example. If you build a workshop next to a precipice, you might not be able to use that shop to make wagons, since there will be no place to put the wagon when it's under construction. Other than that quibble, UD is a very satisfying

builder that puts a friendly face on the people that you're building for. The technological progression charts are a wonderful detail that will make sure you've got your culture focused in the proper direction. There are enough options here that you'll never be sure you're researching the proper item. Warfare is also very nice, with the primary element of fun being hot air balloons(!) dropping bombs. Control of your empire is made a trifle more difficult than necessary by using a semi-real-time interface (a style of play I despise for anything but arcade games). However, it's still very easy to keep tabs on what's going on. Builder fans could get very addicted to this game; it's worth a look.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	92	89	82	90

Despite a weird and somewhat elusive sound bug that caused the game to crash every so often, I found Ultimate Domain to be an immensely enjoyable game (advice: save often). Software Toolworks tech support assures me this is a fluke, and is currently hard at work on the problem. Ultimate Domain has a Populous-style graphic interface, but you don't play God. There is an immense amount of detail built into the game; for example, if you build too many wells, you run the risk of dropping the water table too low for farming to be effective. Technological innovation rules the game: you must develop your technological skills on a hierarchical basis, step by slow step.

Graphics are better-than-average, it was easy for me to pick out my own armies on the screen without squinting. Sound is okay, although that sound bug interferes with my enjoyment of the game only minutely. The interface is good, but it could have been implemented a bit better; sometimes the game refuses to respond to a mouse click. Just keep clicking, you'll eventually get it. Because the game is time-based instead of turn-based, my experience is that the game plays best on a 386 or a 486 in non-turbo mode. You will eventually have so many territories (unless you're losing badly) that it will be impossible to service all of them in a single turn. Software Toolworks has turned out a sweet one.

-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
87	80	79	76	90

Kevin and Ted have both wandered around the office calling this game "Populous with a plot." I disagree. Ultimate Domain is an entertaining, somewhat-reality based simulation. The only thing it really has in common with Populous is the three-quarter perspective. It's a builder, and a pretty good one. You need to place buildings very carefully—with a precision that is not asked for even in games like Sim-City. The sound glitches on our system were frustrating in the extreme. The very slow start is another weak point. One thing I really enjoyed was the invention/research process in UD. Ever since I played Civilization, I have been fascinated by this sort of process in

games, and it's always interesting to me to see what, according to the game designer, proceeds what on the overall invention flowchart. It's also appreciated that the technology carries over from territory to territory. I also enjoy the fact that as the ruler of a territory, I am not all-powerful and I have to work inside particular constraints. I understand that this was made a turn-based game so more than one person could play, but it would be a better game if it played in real time, with maybe a new season every few minutes. UD is a satisfying sim, but it's not as good as a lot of other builders out there. I like the empire building mixed with the empire management, but UD could have easily been called Unnecessary Details.

-Steve

THE TEMPORAL TIMESTM

Temporal Times Nth Whentember -0000-



Evolution - Lost In Time
Available Now: PC & Amiga!



KIDNAPPED BY ALIENS!



PLANET ROCKED BY DISAPPEARANCES

Dateline Earth: The planet has been rocked by the apparently motiveless kidnapping of several important personalities from various periods in history, causing severe repercussions throughout the time continuum.

Polaroids found at the scenes of the abductions indicate that the perpetrators were the same group of little yellow aliens with eyestalks responsible for the disappearance of the Earth Rock Icon Elvis Aaron Presley.

Rumours have been circulating, also supported by photographic evidence, of a breakout attempt by the kidnappees. This attempt, said to be led by an unidentified caveman, has yet to be confirmed, although several sightings have been reported as far apart as Ancient Egypt, Feudal Europe and the Stone Age.

Temporal Police sources are unusually silent, with the only official statement being "We have several promising leads, and we're hoping to make an arrest sometime within the last few centuries."

SPORTS.....P20 FINANCIAL...P11
TV GUIDE.....P5 TRAVEL.....P16
BUSINESS.....P7 HEALTH.....P19



BRONTO BLAMED!

BRONTOSAURUS BLAMED FOR SNARL-UP!

Traffic was at a standstill in Manhattan yesterday morning, as gridlock gripped the city. "Nothing unusual about that," you might say, except that this time the Transit Authority didn't point the finger of blame at the lone driver, but at a large brontosaurus. They should at least get points for originality.

A beleaguered Transit Authority Spokesperson claimed that a large brontosaurus was grazing on trees at the edge of Central Park, and ten-block tailbacks caused by the critter were the reason for the gridlock.

Large crowds of curious bystanders were aggravating the problem, and so far N.Y.P.D animal handlers have failed to come up with an effective way of moving the beast. "You can't just throw a leash on something the size of the Staten Island ferry and expect it to come quietly.", exclaimed a harassed animal expert.

Sources within the United Nations refused to confirm or deny that this latest anomaly was linked to recent discoveries of a ruined Burger Franchise in the ruins of Pompeii and a fossilised '74 Dodge in Yosemite National Park.

Evolution - Lost In Time

A hilarious Race Through Time as you, the Caveman, attempt to get all your fellow characters back to their correct time zones before your Alien captors and their minions grab you and slam you back in the icebox!



Trout Hypnosis

Scientists from the department of Trout Hypnosis and Temporal Science at M.I.T have released a bulletin explaining the recent rash of weird temporal disturbances.

According to the eggheads, someone (or something) has been altering significant events in Earth's history. Disruptions in the flow of the Time Stream caused by this meddling have lead to rifts, such as the one that brought a Brontosaurus to Central Park, Manhattan, causing traffic chaos at the height of rush hour.

The bulletin concludes that unless the flaws in the time stream are repaired quickly, wholesale chaos will ensue.



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**IT'S IN THE CAN! NOW SEE
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MAKE THE DEALS FOR THE BIGGEST MOVIES (OR BIGGEST BOMBS) OF ALL TIME AS A HOLLYWOOD MOGUL.

So you wanna be in pictures. Not just act in them, but control them, deciding who directs them, produces them, even what they are. You want to be a Hollywood Mogul.

Movies start as either original scripts, bestselling books or original ideas. Scripts already exist, but you'll be paying money for a sight-unseen script. Best-selling books have name recognition, but must still be converted to movie scripts. Original ideas (the path of the true Mogul), of course, must have scripts written for them.

At this point, the aspiring Mogul begins a process that he or she is to continue many, many times: doing lunch. You'll do lunch with a screenwriter to negotiate



With a test screening result like this, it's time to splurge on the advertising.

Hollywood Mogul

by DeVuono DeVuono Games

Game Summary

Hire and fire the best of Hollywood as you put together the movie deals of the century. Make money (or not) speculating on the Silver Screen as a Studio Head.

Overall Rating:

86%

Requirements:	640K, 286 or better EGA, Hard Drive
Sound Support:	N/A
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Carey DeVuono
Distributed by:	DeVuono DeVuono Games
Retail Price:	\$59.99
Hard Drive Space:	2 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

[illegible]

The status of all your projects at a glance. Maybe it's time to go script shopping.

their contract to write the script. If your assistants tell you that the script is no good, you'll do lunch with a rewriter.

Once the script is good (or at least passable), it's time to hire everyone else. All talent in Hollywood Mogul, from actors and actresses to producers, directors and screenwriters, are ranked by the money it takes to attach them to projects. You'll have to match creative talents together (most work better in certain genres), as well as decide how big a budget the film will need.

Production begins, and the process is pretty much out of your hands for several months. After post-production has finished, a test screening is held to let you know how good the final product is. Then your final task comes up: deciding when to release the movie (the heavy month of June, or the quiet weeks of March?) and with how much publicity. It's all over but the nail-biting after that as the results from the U.S. and overseas markets roll in.

Hollywood Mogul can be ordered directly from DeVuono DeVuono games by calling 1-800-350-5550.



And the true results are in. Relish this one, hot shot, because very few are like this.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	91	55	N/A	88

You'll either love this or hate this. Graphics are utilitarian, and the sound is nonexistent. but if you've got one drop of creative blood in your body, you'll be spending hours and hours and hours making movies. This is a odd game of strategy, luck and frustration that will keep you coming back for more. Nothing can equal the tension in your stomach as the credits of your latest film roll by, knowing that millions of dollars are about to be made or lost. Those who absolutely must have the latest silicon toys can pass this one by, but those of us who love a well-crafted and original game will enjoy wandering around the bowels of the Hollywood Machine, monkeying with the gears.

-Kevin

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
90	94	75	N/A	94

Hollywood Mogul is more a pleasant diversion than a true picture of the inside workings of a production house. Delving into the depths of my sick and twisted imagination, I came up with some titles and concepts that could never grace these pages. This is a game best shared with friends, and by that I mean that it's more fun to share your weird ideas than to have only yourself to amuse (remember: software piracy is both illegal and immoral, so don't do it!). A note for those who do pirate software: this game has on-disk protection to ensure that it can't be copied onto more than one system at a time. Bravo to Mr. Devuono for building this feature in!

-Ted

-Teo

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
86	88	50	N/A	95

This is an interesting product. The graphics are almost non-existent, there is no sound, but it's sure as heck fun! I got lost in this for a few hours at a time. Creating a great script with top talent and production, a solid budget, lots of advertising and great test marketing and then losing over \$70,000,000 hurts a lot! Hollywood Mogul is not perfect, though. I'd love to see DeVuono Games add the Academy Awards to the product, add in reviews from critics, add in the ability to re-edit scripts and movies. It'd be nice to figure out what went wrong on a given movie. Regardless of omissions like these, Hollywood Mogul is worth some time and effort. Highly entertaining.

-Steve

-Steve

LOGIC GAME



KEYS:

ENERGY:

SHARDS: 19

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BRIDGE IN THE MANNER OF ALFRED SHEINWOLD.

IF YOU LIKE BRIDGE, BRIDGE BARON MAY STEAL YOUR HEART WITHOUT TAKING YOUR WALLET FOR A RIDE.

Bridge. The word may conjure images of little old ladies sitting around drinking tea (or brandy) on weekday afternoons. Your eyes may glaze over when you hear people talk about it. Here's a product that may make you sit up and pay attention.

Bridge Baron, designed by noted bridge expert Tom Throop, is so advanced it has been endorsed by Alfred Sheinwold, celebrated bridge columnist. That's a powerful endorsement, since his column is syndicated in over 300 newspapers nationwide. Alfred Sheinwold is the man who continues to puzzle the minds of bridge players everywhere with his intriguing bridge problems. In fact, Bridge Baron is the



Practice your bidding: seeing how the computer plays helps you understand bridge elements.

Bridge Baron

by MicroLeague

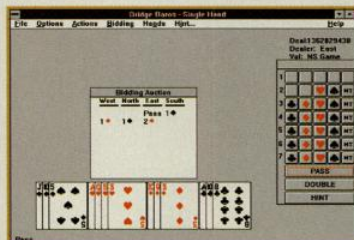
Game Summary

Bridge, the classic card game, is now available for Windows in this latest release from MicroLeague. Varying types and levels of play and an excellent tutor.

**Overall
Rating:**

83%

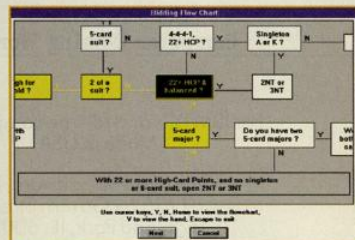
Requirements:	286, EGA/VGA, 1MB RAM, Windows 3.x
Sound Support:	Any Windows-compatible sound card
Controller:	Keyboard, mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Great Game Products
Distributed by:	MicroLeague
Retail Price:	\$59.95
Hard Drive Space:	1.5 Meg
No. of Players:	One player



With even distribution and your partner's spade bid, head for the no-trump bid.

first program to issue a \$2500 Bridge Match Challenge to all its competitors.

Bridge Baron's record speaks for itself. It has been recognized as the leading computer bridge playing program by the American Contract Bridge League. It has achieved two world computer bridge challenges. The features include: more conventions than its competitors; bidding flow charts to track the Baron's thinking; hand evaluation and analysis of all bids; and duplicate bridge match play of 1-16 boards against the computer or another player. There is also a special section called Sheinwold Bridge Challenges which tests the player's declarer-play skill. Should you wish to store a played hand for later review, the Personal Play Library allows you to do so. Bridge Competition lets you play rubber bridge or duplicate bridge against the computer, as well as to compete against other Bridge Baron users for monthly and yearly prizes. Monetary prizes will be doled out each month for the top three scores in each of two categories, and yearly prizes will be meted out to the best five scores.



A bidding flowchart will help you get the hang of bidding strategies quickly.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
92	85	75	N/A	90

Let me hasten to inform you that I am not a bridge player. Therefore, this review will be one devoid of comments as to the game's AI, challenge, etc. What I can say is that if I were ever suddenly struck by an odd urge to learn bridge (to practice for my retirement home, perhaps, or in a misguided attempt to become more British) this program is one of the best ways to do it. It'll play nearly infinite hands with you, telling you what to do and why every step of the way; it'll even show you how it thinks to tell you why to do it. Serious bridge players will like the tournament options, I think. If bridge were a game I'd ever consider playing, this is the computer game I would play it on.

-Kevin

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	94	80	N/A	98

Bridge Baron is billed as "the definitive computer bridge game," and that's probably not too far off. I took umbrage at the Sheinwold Bridge Challenge, though; it doesn't allow you any leeway in bidding, instead relying on Mr. Sheinwold's expertise to force you through a particular scenario. I would have preferred to be guided by comparison: let me bid a hand the way I want, then show me how and why Mr. Sheinwold would have bid it differently. The tutorial program is excellent, covering the many fine details of bidding strategy and finesse. Despite being Windows-based (I'm a command-line junkie), I think that the extras are worth the price of admission.

-Ted

-Tec

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
88	90	70	N/A	87

Admittedly, I do not understand even the rudiments of bidding in this infernal game. It's been explained, it's still Greek. Regardless, the actual hands in bridge are fascinating to me, evidencing a nearly perfect blend of luck, strategy and bluffing skill. Bridge Baron is pretty tasty. Someone really interested in learning the game could learn from this one. The flowcharts and other tidbits are tremendous additions, especially for the novice, even if they still don't explain why bidding one club means what it does. Had I more interest in bridge, I'd have more interest here, and should I ever develop an interest in this game, I'll be sure to come back to this product.

-Steve

-Steve

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NEW WORLD COMPUTING, INC.

CHOO-CHOO BARON WAS AN ENGINEER. . .

AS AN ARCTIC BARON, HE SURE HAD FUN. HE USED SLAVES AND WOOLY MAMMOTS TO MAKE HIS TRAIN RUN.

Centuries from now, a new Ice Age has descended upon the earth, wrapping the planet in a sheath of snow and ice. Humanity has barely survived its attempt to slow global warming. Civilization consists of scattered enclaves of industrial cities connected by a massive heavy rail network. Huge trains traverse the rails, carrying the commerce of the cities safely between them. Starving packs of wolves roam the tundra, hunting the herds of mammoths.

A totalitarian corporation, the Viking Union, controls all commerce on the rails as well as the only source of power and wealth: coal. While not a political power, they have a complete monopoly on the movement of men and materials. Their



Coal is both wealth and power; new mines represent your best source of income.

Arctic Baron

by ReadySoft

Game Summary

Lead progressive elements of the survivors of the human race in a quest to find the Sun. Run around in a really big train, hauling coal, mammoths, slaves and missiles.

Overall Rating: 80%

Requirements:	VGA, 640K, Hard Drive, Mouse
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster and compatibles
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Silmanis
Distributed by:	ReadySoft
Retail Price:	\$49.95
Hard Drive Space:	1.6 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

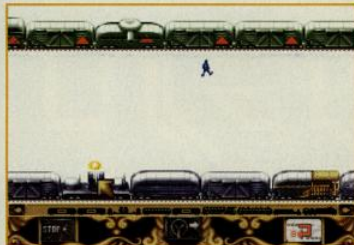


Your train can consist of up to 100 cars, chosen from over twenty different types.

heavily armed trains roam the road network to maintain this stranglehold, itching to force down any insurrection.

You are that insurrection. After stealing the pride of the Viking Union trainyards, the Transarctic, you lead your band of idealists, the Ambivalents (!?), on a grand quest for action, adventure, freedom and that mythical object called the Sun.

Arctic Baron combines trading with adventure as you move across a frozen Europe (plus Northern Africa and the Far East), powered by coal-fired steam. You seek to free the planet from perpetual twilight and slavery by building up the Transarctic. You'll need fresh supplies, food, spare parts and coal to keep your budding wartrain moving. Add up to one hundred cars to your train, including missile cars, slave cars, barracks, tankers, observation cars and more. Fight off slaving wolf packs, hordes of the cannibalistic Mole Men and the battle trains of the Viking Union. Send spies to far towns and sabotage the enemy. A plot will soon unfold to lead you to your final destiny as the Arctic Baron.



Combat features soldiers setting explosive charges, cannons, mammoths and more.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
68	70	72	67	72

Arctic Baron is certainly the most unusual and original game I've seen in a while. Its premise and play is like no other game that I am aware of. However, it suffers from its European origins; it is horribly underpowered for modern PCs, as it was developed for the Atari and Amiga as well. This game is so original and fun that it deserves a major American upgrade to take advantage of modern computing technology. As it is, the interface is clunky and slow; gamers will have to force themselves to be interested in this game. I do feel, however, that the rewards are worth the effort. Arctic Baron breathes (needed) freshness and originality into the pack of adventure games.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
79	83	79	82	92

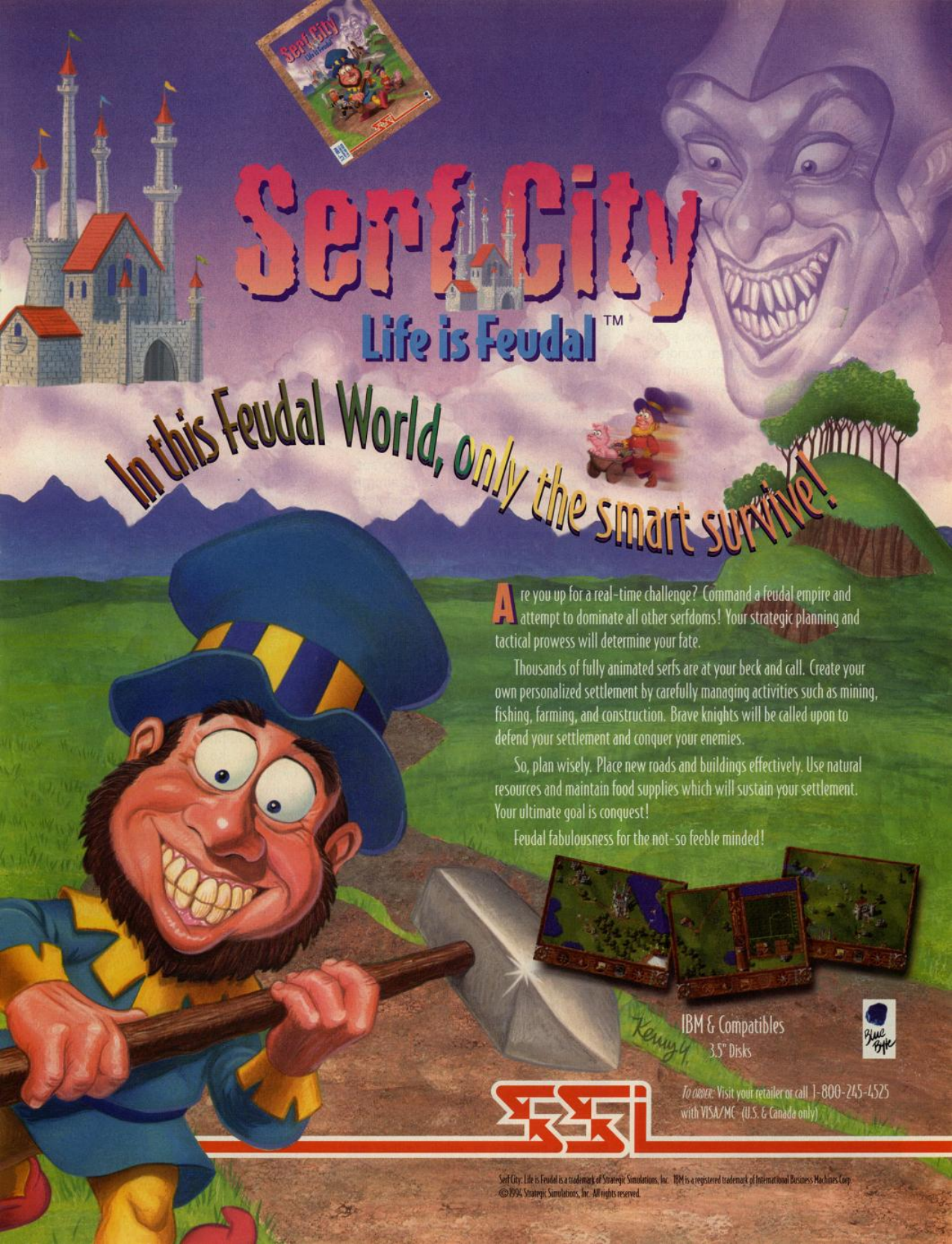
Arctic Baron is one of those atypical games that captures your imagination with the sheer quirkiness of its premise. It has scope; unfortunately, it does not have depth. Because AB was developed by a company in Europe, it was necessary to develop it across the Atari and Amiga platforms (they are still popular in Europe, although the PC is slowly catching up). This spells something of a disaster for it on the PC platform. It ought to have a great deal more detail, and the interface should be a little more seamless; instead, you get the response from your mouse that you would normally associate with, say, plankton. It's not mediocre, but it could be better.

-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
81	77	78	82	74

With easily the most twisted premise I've seen in ages, Arctic Baron is, after the initial joy of seeing the idea behind the game, a letdown. It's underdesigned and suffers from some fallacies. For instance, about half of the cities have no trade whatsoever. The combat sequences are loads of fun and are really the brightest spot in the game. Otherwise, much of the game is tooling around in time-compressed mode, looking to make a buck. Since you only have one train to manage, that's not much fun. Arctic Baron could use a massive overhaul as far as game play and interface as well as depth are concerned. I love the premise, just not the execution.

-Steve



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THE INVASION OF POLAND TO THE FALL OF BERLIN.

THE ENTIRE EASTERN FRONT IS YOUR PLAYGROUND IN HPS SIMULATIONS' TIGERS ON THE PROWL.

Tigers on the Prowl is unlike anything you've experienced before. The scope is the ENTIRE Eastern Front in World War II, from the invasion of Poland in 1939 to the fall of Berlin in 1945. It includes all of the armies involved: German, SS, Luftwaffe, Soviet, Guards, and Axis satellites. Forces are chosen from hundreds of fighting vehicles, weapons, aircraft and force structures that were or even could have been used on the Eastern Front (including captured and lend-lease equipment).

Set at one of the most demanding combat scales (above company and below division), both strategy and tactics must be meshed to achieve success. With each player commanding up to a



German infantry is ordered forward. Orders are processed by realistic chain of command.

Tigers on the Prowl by HPS Simulations

Game Summary

Command your forces along the Eastern Front. Play by mail and Play by E-mail options. Subdivide orders among individual units. Demoralize your enemy.

**Overall
Rating:**

88%

Requirements: XT, VGA, 640K RAM

Sound Support: PC Speaker

Controller: Keyboard/mouse

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: HPS Simulations

Distributed by: HPS Simulations

Retail Price: \$69.95

Hard Drive Space: 2 Meg

No. of Players: One to two players



Customize any force you like, from any time in the war, using any equipment that was used.

brigade-level task force, including support units such as artillery and aircraft, the options and challenges are endless. Combat orders are issued through a chain of command to subordinate company, platoon, and section-sized units.

Accuracy has not been overlooked. Combat is resolved using detailed calculations based on the same principles used by the US Army Ballistics Research Lab. These calculations take into account actual armor thickness and round penetration at the instant of impact, weight of explosive, fragmentation effects, environmental conditions, and more.

Designed for all levels of wargamers, Tigers includes 5 scenarios, a scenario builder, and 3 difficulty levels.

Tigers on the Prowl is available from HPS Simulations, P.O. Box 3245, Santa Clara, California, 95055-3245, or by calling (408) 554-8381. Designer Scott Hamilton is aware of certain bugs in early versions of ToP, and offers free upgrades (with postage) to all purchasers of ToP who contact him at the above address.



Combat is moderated by realistic routines that work from exact, actual ballistic data.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
79	75	55	57	98

Now this is a wargame. ToP contains the most important element of a comprehensive wargame: a scenario editor. If I want to pit a brigade of Panzer Vs with Wirbelwind support against a mechanized infantry battalion, I can. Details are well handled; even though you can easily command a full brigade, individual vehicle reports are generated. It's realistic as well, not just in combat results but also in the frustrating delays of chain of command. A separate product from HPS allows construction of maps from scratch. The attention to detail on this product is frightening (every vehicle used on the Eastern Front!). Lovers of substance over gloss, rally to this cause.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
79	71	66	35	75

It's a generic wargame with an incredibly broad scope and a scenario editor. As such, it's not incredibly thrilling, but neither is it deadly boring and stale. I found that I couldn't really get too excited while I was playing it; the player seems pretty far removed from the action. If you really like comprehensive statistical wargaming, I think you'd probably like Tigers. The graphics are flat and uninteresting, but most hardcore wargamers won't really care. Sound is a return to the minimalist era, but, again, this is a battle of stats and not a piano recital. The one thing that I liked was the depth of detail: this is by far the most minutely comprehensive wargame I've seen.

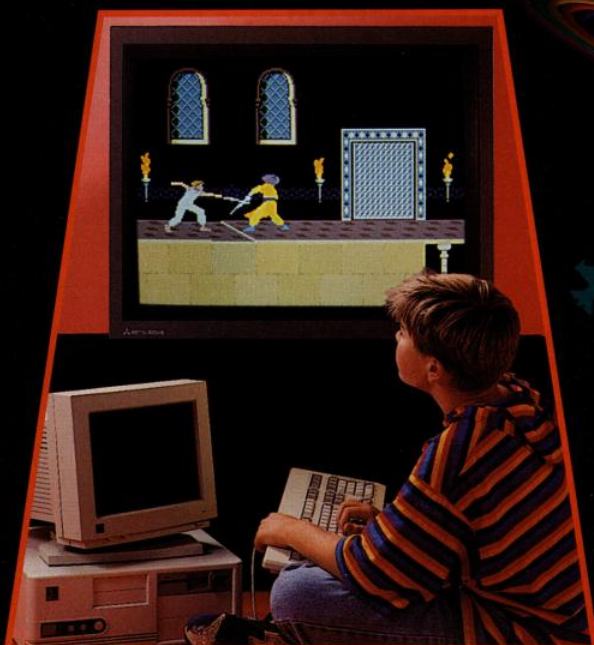
-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
81	85	55	48	93

Tigers on the Prowl is not a game to be taken lightly, nor is it a game to be played by anyone who isn't an experienced sim player. It's highly technical, the graphics aren't that great, there's minimal sound. If you aren't used to that, you'll be disappointed. If you've come to love wargames in spite of the cruddy graphics and sound, there's more than enough here to keep you glued to your screen for days on end. The level of detail rivals anything I've ever seen that claims ultimate detail. This is a wargamer's wargame. There's no fluff in this at all; there is nothing extra in any way. It's pared down, lean and it's ultimately brilliant because of it.

-Steve

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THE BRITISH INVASION, CIRCA 1087 A.D.

THE NORMANS AND SAXONS WILL SHAKE IN THEIR BOOTS BEFORE THE ONSLAUGHT IN VIKINGS II.

Eric gripped tightly to the long dragon's neck that stretched out before him from the bow of his galley. The campfires that burned on the distant shore roiled even brighter in his eyes. Behind him, twenty oars churned the sea in unison pushing the galley onward.

"The other ships have signaled, Eric. They are following us in."

Eric turned to face Bjorn, his swordmaster. "Have you seen Olaf's ship yet?" he asked.

"Not yet, Winterson." The aging swordmaster had always called him that because of his bright white hair. Recently the name had been catching on. "But he'll be joining us soon. His ship was the strongest of all of ours; no storm could



Red armies look across the sea to the lands of their enemies, waiting for a weakness.

Vikings II

by Realism Entertainment

Game Summary

Conquer England through brute force and allocation of vital resources. One to six may play in the lands comprised of the British Isles.

Overall Rating:

84%

Requirements:	386, VGA, 2MB RAM
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster, AdLib
Controller:	Keyboard/mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Realism Entertainment
Distributed by:	Realism Entertainment
Retail Price:	\$49.95
Hard Drive Space:	3 Meg
No. of Players:	One to six players



Red has nearly eclipsed all opposition. White still stands strong in Ire.

have sunk it."

Bjorn joined Eric at the bow and stared at the lights that they fast approached.

"It's a village; a good sized one at that," Eric said.

"Norman or Saxon?" Bjorn inquired.

Eric laughed. It mattered not to him. The Normans had spilled the blood of a hundred sons to keep what they had taken. And the Saxons had spilt even more trying to take it back.

This was the perfect time for the Norsemen to strike! With William the Conqueror dead and gone, the Normans were without a leader. They fought amongst themselves almost as much as with the Saxons. And the Saxons had been without a leader since the Pen-dragon line was lost. Nothing could stand against the Norsemen now. The longships of a dozen Viking clans were following Winterson to finally take the islands their forefathers had so often only raided. This time, they would stay.

Note: Vikings 2 is functionally identical (except for the game map) to Realism Entertainment's Kingdoms of Germany, reviewed on Page 48.



Take the steward's view of your empire, managing resources and gold alike.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
80	89	75	73	83

Vikings 2 is a disappointingly bland empire builder. Frankly, few aspects of the game seem to have even aimed at above average quality levels. Realism bills themselves as picking out the details, but these details are woefully absent from V2. Action consists of moving faceless armies into amorphous territories, and watching a number display typical of real-time accounting systems. Combat is, except for a retreat option, non-interactive and lacking in color. While different troop types are available, the differences are entirely algorithmic, not entertaining. If you love moving piles of numbers around a map and pretending that's an empire, V2 is for you.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
85	91	88	84	91

Relativity is a funny thing. When I played Vikings 2 the first time, I didn't think much of it. This was mainly due to my forces being completely swamped by the computer opponents (I hate to lose). However, after I played with it a bit more, I found that I kind of enjoyed the rather merciless tactics employed by the AI. They worked their serfs to the bone, depleted their natural resources by raping their lands, and conquered swiftly and arrogantly. Once I learned their little prejudices and vagaries, I could plan for their inevitable destruction at my hands. Squishing them like the evil little bugs they are became sort of fun. After all, I'm a Viking, aren't I?

-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
88	90	79	92	91

While it may be true that Vikings II has little more than flashing numbers in the way of combat, the game is actually pretty intense to watch. For instance, I took a chance on one battle, starting with several men fewer than my enemy. A lucky turn of events gave me the victory with moderate losses. I was fascinated and tried the same tactic and got my butt kicked. Vikings II is solid and entertaining. I would love to have more than just one map to play with. It is true that this game is virtually identical to Kingdoms of Germany. So what? The engine works, it's playable and fun and it's addictive. Bring a stock of food when you start to play. You may be there awhile.

-Steve

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KINGDOMS OF GERMANY LETS YOU ESTABLISH YOURSELF AS OVERSEER OF PRETZELS, BRATWURST AND BIERGARTENS.

Prince Ludenz squinted in the sunlight as he scanned the opposing battleline. Groves of trees dotted the rolling hills, blocking his vision at times. But the Prince wasn't worried about surprises. He knew what he was facing: pikemen.

The Saxons loved pikemen. Their shafts lined the hills like an orchard of young saplings, all standing perfectly still in the gentle breeze. His cavalry commander refused outright to charge their lines. His own Bavarian swordsmen outnumbered them three to one, and were still afraid to face their wall of spears.

The sound of distant trumpets interrupted Ludenz and he quickly turned to face the forward line of the approaching Saxon army. Crossbowmen were safely



Expand outward among the forests of northern Germany, adding more lands.

Kingdoms of Germany

by Realism Entertainment

Game Summary

Forge an empire from the divided nations of Europe. Stand tall against the armies of the Holy Roman Empire. Quash any opposing factions under the weight of your army.

Overall Rating: 84%

Requirements: 386, VGA, 2 MB RAM

Sound Support: Sound Blaster

Controller: Keyboard/mouse

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: Realism Entertainment

Distributed by: Realism Entertainment

Retail Price: \$69.95

Hard Drive Space: 3 Meg

No. of Players: One player



Ah, the balance sheets of a young kingdom. Your fortunes (or lack) are reflected here.

tucked behind the slowly marching pikemen. To his right, his own commanders were running frantically back and forth, urging their men to hold formation. Ludenz waited, aware of the thirty mounted knights that were waiting behind the hill. He signaled, and the knights advanced slowly.

Once the pikemen had come within one hundred yards of his line, Ludenz gave the signal. His knights sped off at full gallop toward the right flank. The pikemen froze momentarily, then continued onward.

At that instant, a full half of Ludenz's swordsmen picked up the longbows that had been hidden in the grass beside them. Arrows were nocked and let fly. A moment later they were falling in an ever-darkening mass upon the stunned pikemen. His knights advanced menacingly. The pikemen were fully aware what would happen if they broke formation now...

Note: Kingdoms of Germany is functionally identical (except for the game map) to Realism Entertainment's Vikings 2, reviewed on Page 46.



Which direction to expand in? Avoid the tangle in the center like the plague.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
80	89	75	73	83

Kingdoms of Germany is a mediocre by-the-numbers empire builder. Generic is the word of the day here. Move numerical armies into territories. Take them over. Garrison them. Use the proceeds to build more troops and take over more territories. While numerous different types of troops exist (a plus), you never control them directly other than telling them to retreat. Therefore, combat, which should be exciting since it's the whole point of the game, is bland. If you've got a craving for moving faceless troops around and matching databases with a pretty decent AI, Kingdoms of Germany will do. However, most people will prefer something more exciting.

-Kevin

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
85	91	88	84	91

Kingdoms of Germany is almost identical to Vikings 2 (reviewed this issue), except that the maps are different. Since I played V2 first, I had no trouble getting adjusted to Kingdoms of Germany. The AI appears to act in essentially the same way (slash-and-burn rape of the land and people), and so I had no problem enjoying taking them down. This is not to say I had no trouble taking them down; they are vicious little buggers who are expansionist in the extreme, and they are very difficult to destroy. A note to those users who have 386s: this game plays very slowly on our 386-33, so judge whether or not you want to purchase it with that in mind.

-Ted

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
88	90	79	92	91

Kingdoms of Germany is functionally the exact same game as Vikings II with a brand new map. Despite the exact same interface and game mechanics, KOG is a little more difficult, only because all of the kingdoms are on one land mass as opposed to several islands, meaning that everyone is lumped together. It's a lot of number crunching, really, so if you want more than digits progressing ever downward on your screen, do your best to avoid this game. If, however, you can see the game behind the numbers, Kingdoms of Germany will reward you with a rich gaming experience. It's no graphics fest or sound experience, but it's fun to play. Very solid.

-Steve

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It's 1941, it's NORTH AFRICA AND YOU ARE THERE. UNFORTUNATELY, SO IS THE GERMAN AFRIKA KORPS.

The North Africa campaigns began in September 1940 with the swift and decisive capture by the Italian army of British Somaliland. They ended with the capitulation of a quarter of a million Axis soldiers in May 1943. Operation Crusader covers the period when General Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps were at their most active, from the rout of British forces that drove them to the border of Egypt to the crushing defeat dealt Rommel by a combined force of US, English and French armies.

Operation Crusader is the first Avalon Hill game developed by Atomic Games. Players of the V for Victory series of military sims will find graphics and game play in this game identical to those.



The German forces are arranged outside Tobruk. How long can you hold them off?

Operation Crusader

by Avalon Hill

Game Summary

Rommel maneuvers closer to the British stronghold of Tobruk. Take either side and replay the opening campaigns in North Africa before Patton arrived.

Overall
Rating:

83%

Requirements: 3 Meg RAM, Hard Drive
256 Color Monitor

Sound Support: N/A

Controller: Mouse

Available for: Macintosh

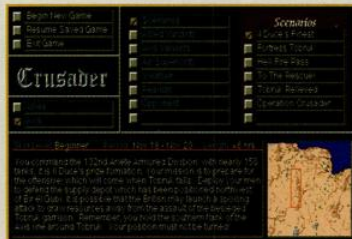
Designed by: Atomic Games

Distributed by: Avalon Hill

Retail Price: \$69.95

Hard Drive Space: 4 Meg

No. of Players: One player



Select from six scenarios, each with historical and non-historical variations.

Campaigns included in Operation Crusader are a skirmish between the Italian Ariete Armored Division and the 1st South African Division, the Axis assault on Tobruk, and Operation Crusader itself. In this scenario, you control either the Axis or Allied forces in North Africa for the entirety of the war in November and December of 1941.

To change the game, you can choose a number of historical variants that change the possibilities and potentially the outcome of a given battle and the war. Examples are: making South African troops veterans, Axis captures or ignores Malta and more.

Regardless of which scenario and which side of the conflict you choose to play, you will need to move with precision and determination. In spite of the harsh weather conditions, oppressive heat and lack of water, the campaign in North Africa in World War II was one of speed and movement. The Afrika Korps was noted for both its ferocity and its ability to move quickly through the desert thanks to Rommel's merciless schedule.



Take a higher view of the strategic situation. Is more air support called for?

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
89 86 82 84 65

Do not be fooled by the name at the top of your game box: this is a V for Victory game. These things happen when a development company changes hands. As such, if you've ever played a V4V game before, you know exactly what this game is. If you haven't, prepare yourself for technically excellent but ultimately unsatisfying WWII combat. I've been through it time and time again, but I still can't find any real urge to play these games. They're clean and realistic, but ultimately soulless and lacking in sufficient detail to hold my interest. Discovering that a unit has suffered 7% losses bores me after a while, and I like wargames. If you're a V4V fan, you'll like it.

-Kevin

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
91 84 86 86 65

Ooh, I hate to lose. This game is quite entertaining if you enjoy wargaming (and I do seem to be lightening up somewhat in my view that wargames are kind of boring and stupid), although I believe this game has some faulty AI. I say this because, even with a lopsided battle of 20 tanks to 1 infantry, my tanks managed to lose rather resoundingly. My only response was "Huh?" But it held throughout the game. I can only assume that the enemy forces are so well-entrenched that their force multiplier is increased to near god-like levels. So unless you are attacking with literally everything you've got, be prepared to lose most battles. Nice looking, but it left me frustrated.

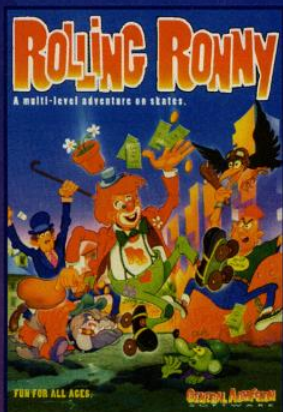
-Ted

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
90 89 86 88 85

Having been a fan of the V for Victory series, I have been anxious to see what Atomic Games is doing for Avalon Hill. I needn't have wondered; this game could've been a V4V game just as easily as an Avalon Hill World at War game. Graphics are clean and attractive. I like this one a touch more than previous Atomic Games titles for the simple reason that I'm more interested in this aspect of World War II. I could hope for a couple more variants, but I can live without them. It would also be nice to have more of a feel for the actual combat rather than just a bunch of flashing statistics. Still, I like this kinda stuff, and I'll continue to play this one long after others have paled.

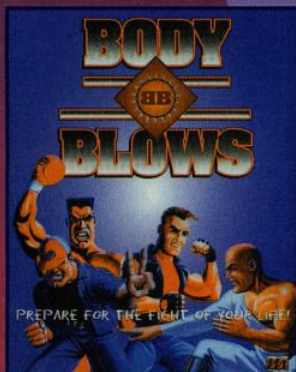
-Steve

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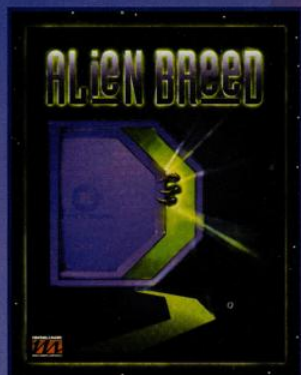


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THE HOUSES OF YORK AND LANCASTER ARE AT IT AGAIN. . .

THE QUEST FOR THE CROWN IS ON IN KINGMAKER!



The first English Civil War was fought, at least at first, by soldiers and commanders bloodied in the sporadic but exhaust-

Kingmaker

by Avalon Hill

Game Summary

Control the last of eight rivals of the royal houses of Lancaster and York for the throne of England. Will your winning strategy prevail, or will you bend to the executioner's axe?

Overall Rating: 91%

Requirements: 286, DOS 5.0, VGA

Sound Support: Sound Blaster, AdLib

Controller: Keyboard/mouse

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: Avalon Hill

Distributed by: Avalon Hill

Retail Price: \$59.95

Hard Drive Space: 5 Meg

No. of Players: One player



Pursue and be pursued by ancient enmities across the fields of Britain.

ing Hundred Years War against France. Although victory was theirs repeatedly, the English could not hold France due to lack of manpower and money. Although they had brought France almost to her knees, the English ended the uneven contest by surrendering the inheritance of William the Conqueror and all the conquests of Edward III and Henry V.

Henry VI was a weak king. Controlled from childhood by powerful nobles, he grew up an unpopular monarch, fueled by the mismanagement of the wars with the French and his reliance on disreputable ministers. This poor rulership sparked the Yorkist revolt.

The Wars of the Roses were fought during a time of profound political



Sort out your initial conspirators, awarding offices and titles to best advantage.

change. Feudalism was on its way out as centralized government took hold. The problem faced by European monarchies was how to increase their own power at the expense of the baronies without the barons rising against them. To this already unstable mix came the final ingredient for civil war in England—a weak and despised king who took the throne before he was even one year old.

The Wars of the Roses were fought in the English heartlands, and Edward IV of York knew full well that control of the midlands was paramount to a successful outcome. London, of course, was the most important location to control: she had ready access to the sea, as well as the smithies necessary to churn out the weapons of war. Other cities proved vital as well: had Margaret of Anjou (wife of Henry VI) been allowed to enter



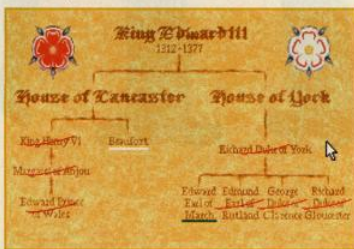
This is the price of failure. Beheadings are a common sport for royalty and nobles alike.



Remember *noblesse oblige*; home troubles can summon nobles at inopportune moments.

Gloucester, she would have stood on Lancastrian ground, and Edward would have found her to be much more dangerous there. Despite this, cities did not play a major role in the Wars. Instead, regional allegiances were the supporting factor to a decisive outcome. London could afford to be Yorkist because it was far removed from Henry's seat of power.

This was the final stage of feudalism. It meant that the government relied on its regional magnates to govern in the king's name in those parts of the kingdom where the risks of disorder were high and the king's capacity to act correspondingly low.



Few heirs are left to challenge the throne. Crown Edward, and the race is over.

The Wars of the Roses were a power struggle, and power in the 1400's meant land, title and the authority of office. Loyalty was secured through the granting of titles and land in the Crown's gift. When the House of York felt it was being purposely mistreated at the hands of an unfair king, it set in motion one of the largest wars in medieval history.



Survive the internecine cruelties and the crown is yours to distribute at will.

Interface	•	Playability	•	Graphics	•	Sound	•	Replay Value
86		92		89		82		94

Wow. Avalon Hill has finally come into its own in the computer market. AH holds an advantage, of course: they make great boardgames already, so all they need is an accurate conversion and decent AI for the opponents. Kingmaker provides this in spades. Instead of the cool analytical wargame I expected, it explodes in a fury of opportunistic nobles, pointless atrocities, mad scrambles and naked lust for power, punctuated only by the (brief) cries of the beheaded. Careful strategy is pointless in this mercurial game—but that's the intent of the design. Situations fluctuate rapidly from turn to turn; your ace defender of your chosen heir may be called suddenly to Wales

to deal with a peasant uprising. Battles are generally evenly matched affairs (apart from the occasional ambush) and thus are inconclusive. To win, you must strike like a shark through chaotic waters and seize what you judge to be the best objective. Thus, keen judgement, coupled with opportunity and luck, replaces tactical skill. Kingmaker is a game to return to time and time again. The AI is moderate; beatable, but capable of presenting a decent fight. The true fun in the game is its randomness, not to mention its callous disregard of computer game "traditions." Kingmaker was not created to fit some marketing niche; it is that most elegant beast, a game created simply as a game. Good design always wins in the end. **-Kevin**

Interface	•	Playability	•	Graphics	•	Sound	•	Replay Value
87		93		84		94		93

As I understand it, Kingmaker was originally a board game. Having never played the board version, I can't say how true this is to the original. What I can say is that the computer version is superb. While the graphics are no great shakes, game play is excellent. The interface takes a bit of getting used to, but anyone with reasonable intelligence should be able to fathom its inner workings. It will take a much higher IQ to conquer Kingmaker, though. The reference manual is fairly thorough, although a more detailed description of some types of movement and attack would be nice. The historical reference is a brilliant addition to this package, since many people do not

fully understand the history of the Wars of the Roses and medieval military formations. I also appreciate the game from my English major standpoint; liberally sprinkled throughout the game are quotes from Shakespeare's historical plays. While I would like to see more Shakespeare, everywhere, all the time (being a Shakespeare geek has its downside), this game delivered full .VOC files of Shakespearean outtakes. Talk about great sound bites! Kingmaker scores an extra point or two just for the fact that it can be played on my decrepit 286 at home (a tip of the brim to the guys at Avalon Hill; well done!). If military sims are your thing, or you're intrigued at all by English history, buy Kingmaker. **-Ted**

Interface	•	Playability	•	Graphics	•	Sound	•	Replay Value
82		88		83		92		96

I can't admit that I liked Kingmaker right off the bat. There were, I felt, some control problems with the game. However, a nice sit-down with the manual helped me out tremendously. While I would have loved to have a walkthrough, the nature of the game is such that a walkthrough is sort of impossible. Be that as it may, I soon found myself large and in charge. I did have some problem loading nobles on ships and getting ships into port. Additionally, it can be easy to click the wrong way and lose movement points for one noble or another. Regardless of any problems I had controlling the game, I had a lot of fun with it. The computer plays relatively intelligently, going after your

nobles and especially the king if you happen to have him in battle. Said battles should always be player controlled; there have been myriad times that I won with a smaller army or at least killed as many nobles as I lost by running for and attacking my enemy's nobles. The introduction, in spite of the sort of goofy Shakespeare picture in the corner, is lush and entertaining. The conclusion is also pretty nice. I also dug the voice throughout the game, sort of a Shakespeare's greatest hits of clips ("Once more unto the breach, dear friends," etc.). Graphics aren't great for the main game, but the little animated pictures before many of the turns are very tasty. If you can't get enough conquest, you can't afford to miss this one. **-Steve**

Holy Sphinn



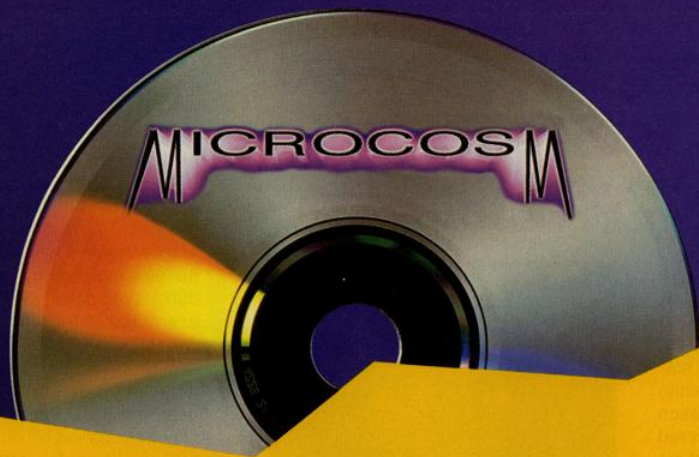
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Without warning, they appeared. In a far-off quadrant of the colonized galaxy, hordes of vicious aliens in an armada the likes of which had never been seen laid waste to the entire Gallenian star system. In the aftermath of the Gallenian slaughter, United Earth ConFederation technologists from Iridon 5 discovered an immense alien ship at the heart of the invading fleet. In an extraordinary display of advanced technology, the ship began to emit an unusual field of radiation. The scientists were completely baffled, as scientists under alien attack are wont to be.

The alien energy field began to take the shape of a giant glowing cube. Within days, the metamorphosis appeared



Strange ships will attack you; but as Earth's only defender, you must repel them.

Astro Chase 3D

by MacPlay

Game Summary

Blast mega mines and enemy ships from the space surrounding Earth. Try not to get toasted by myriad debris that seems to constantly hover in the area.

Overall Rating:

61%

Requirements: Color Mac, System 6.0.7, 1800K free RAM

Sound Support: N/A

Controller: Mouse

Available for: Macintosh

Designed by: First Star

Distributed by: Interplay

Retail Price: \$39.95

Hard Drive Space: 5.5 Meg

No. of Players: One player



Beginning options include access to five practice levels before the furor begins.

complete. The resultant cube measured a thousand miles on a side. Suddenly, the luminescent cube vanished, leaving no trace in Gallenian space.

Seconds after the cube's disappearance, the sub-space radio on Iridon 5 was jammed with messages of great concern from the planets located on the periphery of ConFederation space. Computer analysis indicated that all of the distress signals were reporting essentially the same phenomenon. Inexplicably, the alien invaders had created a force field that had enveloped the entire ConFederation. The force field did no harm to anything within its boundaries, but it had effectively sealed off the ConFederation from the outside universe. A full-scale alien invasion had begun.

The aliens have launched a series of planet-destroying mines directly at Earth. You are in command of the only vessel that can stop them: the Ultraship. Any one of these mines carries enough destructive force to vaporize the planet. A clear head and steady hands must now set to work, destroying the mines...



Earth quavers under the final assault. Which to shoot, the mine or the attacker behind?

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value

85 87 81 89 34

What is it about the Mac that seems to attract uninteresting shooters? I can well understand the need Mac owners have for good action games; but the emphasis here is on good. Unfortunately, games like Astro Chase 3D keep popping up. It's one of those games where you can get to the seventh level by keeping the fire button held down. While the graphics are somewhat pretty, the Mac is clearly capable of better. The sounds are the only thing that surprised me amid this squalor of mid-Eighties arcade action. It's fairly pleasing to play for a period of, oh, four minutes, but quickly pales after that. Astro Chase 3D is fast, breezy, and utterly devoid of depth.

-Kevin

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value

78 68 89 85 25

There are some days, usually when I've been trying to install some sort of hardware item, that I question my belief that PCs are inherently better than Macs for gaming. Then I come across a game like Astro Chase 3D, and my faith in the old outmoded addressing system is restored. While this is ostensibly an arcade-type game, I can't remember any arcade game that left me feeling as though I had not had fun. Picture flying a spaceship that is supposedly the best in man's experience. Why is it so user-hostile? Why is fire control handled in the most annoying way possible? While I commend MacPlay for the nice graphics, the game is just sort of flat and uninteresting.

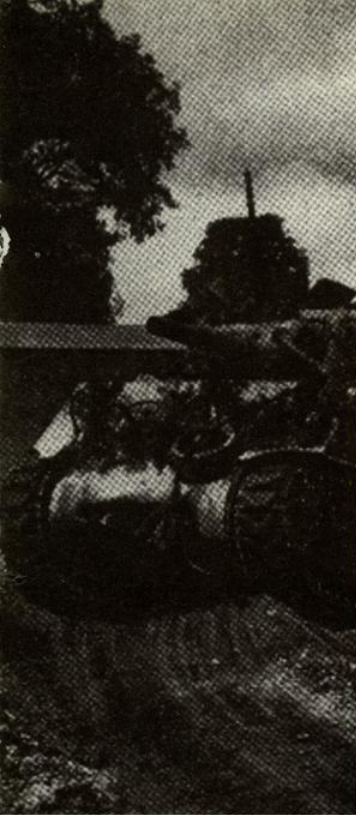
-Ted

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value

80 58 83 86 51

Now let me get this straight—during an alien invasion that threatens the very existence of Earth, we send one ship. It doesn't hurt the ship to get tagged by an asteroid or a planet, but if Earth's moon hits it, it evaporates. Speaking of the moon, it circles our beloved planet at cheetah speed. When things pass by, they cause wind in an area with no atmosphere. And where's the sun? Why are there this many asteroids around Earth? This game is laden with logical fallacies, which really wouldn't matter if Astro Chase 3D was at all an entertaining shooter. It isn't, so all of the goofiness becomes more apparent. Control is difficult, game play is unrewarding. Not even close.

-Steve



In 1944, This Was The Only Heavy Metal Touring Europe.

American M4 Shermans. Tigers of the Third Reich. These were the tanks that rocked Europe from D-Day to the fall of Berlin in World War II. The same armored juggernauts that you'll command in the explosive new game **Across the Rhine** from MicroProse.



ACROSS THE RHINE™



Jump into history's most famous tanks and experience the fierce combat and tough decisions that gripped World War II tank commanders. Take command of U.S. or German forces. Control single tanks or entire Companies. And blast your way through enemy units across the war-torn landscape of Europe.

Across the Rhine from MicroProse. And you thought heavy metal started in the 70's.

MICRO PROSE®

© 1993 MicroProse ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE

Although I was going to vent my spleen about the state of motherboard design, I've decided that it would be much more productive to introduce a little education. Herewith, some knowledge about the way IRQs are addressed in today's PC.

The acronym IRQ stands for interrupt request. Don't ask me how the original computer geeks came up with that particular designation; I simply don't know. What I do know is that something as simple as a conflict between two pieces of hardware in your system over an interrupt request can cause your system to lock up tighter than a funeral drum.

When IBM built the first PC, back in the Stone Age (circa 1979), they needed a way to tell the CPU that there were certain pieces of hardware attached to the system. They selected the 8259 interrupt controller chip, which handles eight interrupts (0 through 7) on a decreasing priority level. Thus was born the addressing system which we all know and love. IRQ 0 is attached to the system timer. IRQ 1 addresses the keyboard. These IRQ's cannot be redirected for anything else. IBM quickly realized that users were very limited in future expansion (since only six interrupts were left over) and so they added a second 8259 chip. Since I can tell by the avid page rustling noises you are dying to know how, the answer is simple: IBM cascaded the second chip to the first through interrupt 2.

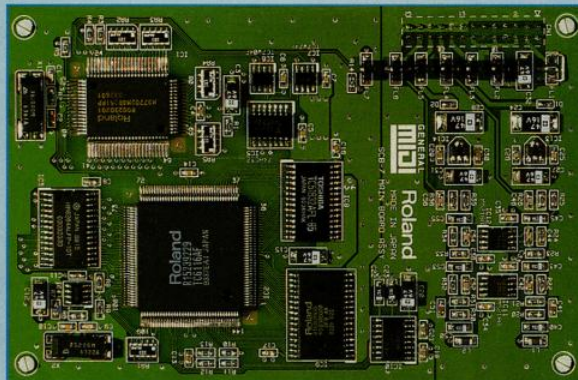
What this means for all you first time hardware installers is that you should never assign any hardware to interrupt 2. The reason is fairly obvious: if the computer receives an interrupt signal from anything at IRQs 9 through 15, the system stands a good chance of locking up. This is also the reason that sound cards will not accept an IRQ higher than 7: there's too high a probability that conflicting signals will occur.

The other low IRQs are predesignated, as well. IRQ 3 handles COM2. IRQ 4 handles COM1 (don't ask; I don't know). IRQ 5, that most popular of sound card IRQs, handles requests from LPT2. Since most people either don't have a LPT2 port or don't have anything connected to it, this is optimal. IRQ6 is your hard drive controller. IRQ7 address LPT1.

I hope this little primer has helped.

EXCLUSIVE! ROLAND'S NEW SOUND CANVAS DAUGHTERCARD!

ROLAND HOPES TO CHANGE THE WAY GAMERS THINK ABOUT MIDI SUPPORT. AND THEY WILL.



Roland is known for its exceptional MIDI products, and they have just announced a product about which all gamers should know. The Sound Canvas DB is a daughterboard that will attach to any Sound Blaster 16-series card to provide general MIDI support. Roland claims that the Sound Canvas DB is a major improvement over both FM sound and traditional wavetable sound. The card contains a dedicated microprocessor that automatically manipulates over 200 voice parameters per note in real time to generate the most expressive sound possible.

Sound Canvas DB features built-in reverb with eight different selectable reverb types to allow ambient effects ranging from large concert halls to intimate clubs. A separate digital chorus effect is available to add depth. The 128 CD-quality synthesized sounds in Sound Canvas DB cover a wide assortment of acoustic instruments from pianos and strings to ethnic sounds to electronic instruments. There are also six full drum sets for use as needed.

The Sound Canvas DB is set to be released in retail stores this month. Emerging from Roland's two decades of research in professional wavetable instrument and synthesizer sound, this new member of Roland's Sound Canvas line provides digital signal processing at the cutting edge of Roland's research efforts. Included with the board is ready-to-use software, plus

one hundred standard MIDI files for over three hours of royalty-free music.

Sound Canvas DB is an easy and inexpensive way for users disappointed with the mediocre quality of present sound cards to realize the full audio potential of their computing environment. Professional concert hall sound can

be had for the price of a song.

Ease of Use	Installation	Usefulness
99	99	91

When I was first handed the press release for the Sound Canvas DB, I looked at the price and thought, "You've got to be kidding." Then I installed the board, and realized just how serious they were. This board will be **the must-have for anyone** who considers themselves a game enthusiast. The sound is absolutely the purest I have ever heard come out of a General MIDI product. Installation is quite literally a snap: just snap it onto any Sound Blaster 16-series board. No installation software is necessary, and the SET BLASTER line in your autoexec.bat will automatically designate the card's port. This one's going to be bigger than the Beatles, folks.

-Ted

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

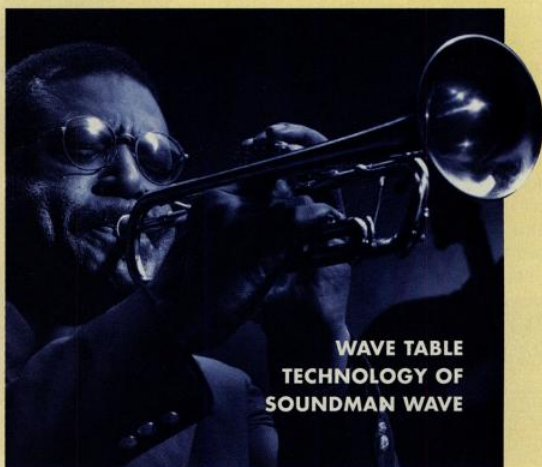
Roland Corporation

7200 Dominion Circle
Los Angeles, CA 90040-3696
(213) 685-5141
Fax: (213) 722-7408

Sound Canvas DB by Roland

Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Roland
Distributed by:	Roland
Retail Price:	\$229.00

DON'T BUY A SOUND BOARD UNTIL YOU'VE HEARD US TOOT OUR HORN.



SOUNDMAN® WAVE: GENUINELY BETTER SOUND, FULLY LOADED.

Maybe you've read* how wavetable synthesis uses actual recordings of instruments to create synthesized sounds.

And how fantastic it sounds versus regular FM synthesis. Well it's true. SoundMan Wave lets gamers rock and roll with the real thing for an affordable price. And it comes loaded with great software like Recording Session® and MCS MusicRack™.

COMPLETE COMPATIBILITY GUARANTEE.

SoundMan Wave's Yamaha OPL4 chip is completely compatible with the AdLib/Sound Blaster standard so it is backed by a 100% money-back



COMPUSA
The Computer Connection

WAL*MART

compatibility guarantee, and to back that up we'll give \$500 to the first person that comes across a game with which SoundMan Wave isn't fully Sound Blaster compatible. Right now, hot games like X-wing, 7th Guest, Doom and Space Quest 5 already take full advantage of our wave technology. Dozens more are expected to hit the market each month.



DON'T BELIEVE US? CALL NOW FOR OUR FREE SOUND ADVICE AUDIO CD AND GET A \$10 REBATE.

Listen to expert advice about adding sound to PCs, and hear for yourself the incredible difference between SoundMan Wave and run-of-the-mill 16-bit boards. Call for our Sound Advice Audio CD before supplies run out, and we'll enclose a \$10 rebate coupon:

1-800-936-0078, OFFER #6T

*See PC Magazine, 12/21/93, p 95. TM/©—properties of registered owners.

EGGHEAD SOFTWARE
North America's Software Megastore.



The Senseware® Company

STRAP YOURSELF IN FOR THE RIDE OF A LIFETIME.

THRUSTMASTER'S NEW FORMULA T1 DRIVING WHEEL AND PEDAL COMBO FEELS LIKE THE REAL THING.

Just as the ThrustMaster joystick and weapons control system are the preferred product for military flight sims, so too will the Formula T1 become the standard against which all other driving wheels are judged. Featuring a spring-loaded wheel (no more of that endlessly free spinning common to other wheels) and accelerator stick, the Formula T1 is engineered with the high quality and reliability associated with the ThrustMaster name. The Formula T1 wheel can be used apart from the pedals, but in order to use both your system must have a

true four-way joystick port. Check your port's manufacturer for compatibility.



Formula T1

by ThrustMaster

Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	ThrustMaster
Distributed by:	ThrustMaster
Retail Price:	\$179.95

Ease of Use	Installation	Usefulness	Durability
95	85	70	90

Want the thrill of real racing action? 'Course ya do! The wheel and pedals have excellent control pots, providing game control that is as smooth as the feel. About the only drawback to the Formula T1 that I could find is that it is currently only compatible with World Circuit 1.05 (MicroProse patch to 1.00 downloadable from their BBS) and Indycar Racing (Papyrus). On the other hand, the FT1 deserves the massive support I predict it will get from software companies in the future. This is easily the finest driving wheel I've come across in my travels, and the pedals are top-notch, too. Although the retail price is a bit high, buyers should be able to find it at street prices around \$130. **-Ted**

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

ThrustMaster

10150 SW Nimbus
Portland, OR 97223-4337
(503) 639-3200
Fax: (503) 620-8094



JOYSTICK ERGO SUM: THE RELAXED FIT.

SUNCOM'S LATEST EFFORT IS POLISHED, STYLISH AND COMFORTABLY DESIGNED FOR THE GAMING EXECUTIVE.

Your boss walks into your office. What do you think his overall impression is going to be when he sees that mammoth military flightstick sitting on your desk? Now you can have your job and keep it too, thanks to Suncom's Axys joystick.

Designed to match today's office environment, the Axys is that vague color that IBM's interior designers like to call "putty." The form of the joystick is very conservative; most people (namely those who frown on the activities that would involve a joystick) won't even notice it's there. And if they do, tell them

Axys by Suncom

Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Suncom
Distributed by:	Suncom
Retail Price:	\$29.99



Ease of Use	Installation	Usefulness	Durability
94	N/A	84	92

Ergonomics are all the rage these days, what with the threat of CTS. The Axys joystick provides a modicum of relief for weary wrists. Its sleek look means no more disapproving glances from the boss. And, on top of all this, its response is incredibly good. I tested the Axys out on X-Wing (which has become the *locus classicus* for joystick testing) and found that it affords better-than-average control. While most sticks leave very little room for error in movement, the Axys does a premiere job of giving the player access to the fine adjustments that X-Wing demands. The wrist rest is comfortable too, if you enjoy playing games with the joystick on a flat surface.

-Ted

it's an experimental mouse design and change the subject.

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

Suncom

6400 W Gross Point Rd.
Niles, IL 60714
(708) 647-4040
Fax: (708) 647-7828

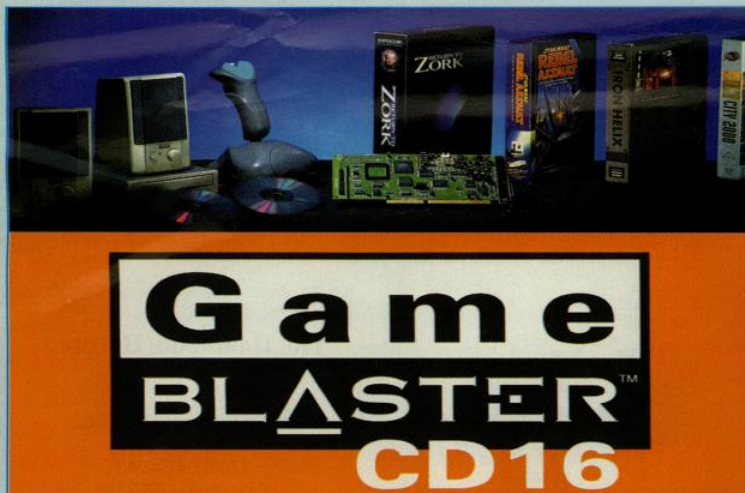
**The only thing it
doesn't simulate is
ear popping.**

If it were any more real, your chair would be in a 30° bank. Our new Microsoft® Flight Simulator™ has four planes, each with its own instrument panel created digitally from actual photographs. There are storm clouds and sunsets to fly into. Crashes are scarily real. And you can fly to airports anywhere in the world. It's just one of the realistic simulations we have waiting for you to take control. Everything is at your reseller. So, take off.



UNLEASH THE MONSTER GAMER INSIDE YOU.

CREATIVE LABS GAME BLASTER CD16: THE COMPLETE MULTIMEDIA PACKAGE FOR THE COMPLETE GAMING SYSTEM.



The Game Blaster CD16 is a complete multimedia upgrade kit that has three key features: guaranteed Sound Blaster compatibility, good bundled software, and an exceptional price.

Creative Labs has come out with a moderately priced multimedia upgrade kit for those who don't use, don't need, or don't care about business software. In other words, folks like us. Admittedly, there is some software in this package that could find itself used for the nefarious concerns of business, but it could also be used just for fun.

Unlock your computer's potential for fun with Game Blaster CD16. Complete with six CD-ROM game titles, a double-speed CD-ROM drive (photo CD compatible), speakers, high-performance Suncom FX-2000 joystick, and the much acclaimed Sound Blaster 16 series

sound card, this upgrade kit spells absolute coverage for any Sound Blaster compatible game.

For those gamers unaware of the benefits of a Sound Blaster card, check out the technical aspects: 16-bit stereo or mono playback from 5KHz to 44KHz, 20-voice OPL3 FM music synthesizer, microphone, stereo line-in and CD audio jacks, MPU-401 MIDI interface, and a joystick port. The CD-ROM drive is fully MPC level 2 compliant. It has a 350ms access time, 300 KB/sec data transfer rate, is multi-session photo CD compatible, and has a built-in 64KB RAM buffer. In addition, the CD-ROM drive is of the front-loading tray type, so forget your worries about misplaced disk caddies. The flightstick is of typically high Suncom quality: switchable fire buttons, auto fire switch, throttle control, suction cup base, and smooth-as-velvet ergonomic design.

While it is unfortunate that this kit will not work with anything less than a 386, as far as I've been able to ascertain only hardworking hardware editors still have anything resembling a 286 lying around their house. Another requirement for this system is 4MB RAM, so stock up on the silicon if you haven't already.

Ease of Use	Installation	Usefulness
95	87	95

As a general rule, sound cards that are advertised as "100% Sound Blaster compatible" aren't. Sound Blaster sound cards are the only ones that truly are 100%; other cards are generally in the 96-to-99.9 percent compatibility range. While that measly 4% isn't much to fret over, it does make a difference for some games (anything from poor sound to complete system lock-ups). This sound card is Creative Labs' current low-price leader, but it is still a good card for games; however, I think it's price is a bit hefty for the market segment at which it is aiming. It's a well-planned package, it offers good sound, and its bundled software is a nice bonus.

-Ted

INSTALLATION TIPS

Difficulty Rating(1-10): 5

Okay, first things first. If you already have a joystick port in your system, you'll want to disable it if you want to use the joystick port on the Sound Blaster card. This is by no means rare with other sound cards; I'm simply mentioning it so you don't get stressed when your system locks up due to an IRQ conflict.

When you're installing any CD-ROM drive, it's best to connect the daisy cable (that flat gray cable) and audio cable to the drive first; simply feed the cables through the drive opening on the front of your computer before you slide the drive into place. As an incidental note to first-timers, there is a red stripe along one edge of any daisy cable you see; this stripe is always connected to pin #1 on the socket you're connecting it to. Look at the jack on the sound card. Toward one end, you should see the number "1" printed on the board next to it. Do the same with the CD end of the cable. FAILURE TO CONNECT THE CABLE PROPERLY WILL RESULT IN A BLOWN SOUND CARD AND/OR HARD DRIVE! Once the drive is positioned, connect it to your power supply using any free standard power connector.

Installing the software is easy, but you should have a good idea of what's connected to your system before you assign IRQs and addresses. Generally, IRQ 5 is a good bet since most people have nothing connected to their LPT2 port. If port address 220 gives your system problems, try 240, then 260. One of these should work.

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

Creative Labs

1901 McCarthy Blvd.
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 428-6600
Fax: (408) 428-6611

Game Blaster CD 16 by Creative Labs

Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Creative Labs
Distributed by:	Creative Labs
Retail Price:	\$549.00

UNLEASH THE POWER OF YOUR SOUND CARD.

A COMPANY WITH THE UNLIKELY NAME OF JAZZ HIPSTER HITS THE COMPUTER SPEAKER MARKET.



J-520AV

by Jazz Hipster

Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Jazz Hipster
Distributed by:	Jazz Hipster
Retail Price:	\$149.95

Jazz Hipster has been manufacturing computer speakers for several years and distributing them through the OEM market. The industry knows the name well; now it's time for the public to get to know them, too.

The J-520AV is an input-amplified speaker system that carries a moderate price tag for

the performance it delivers. Its low distortion (0.05%) and frequency response range (50 to 20000 Hz) ensure that you hear exactly what game designers want you to hear. The speakers are magnetically shielded for crackle-free performance, and they carry separate volume,

Ease of Use	Installation	Usefulness	Durability
90	N/A	95	97

If you own a cheap pair of computer speakers (like the kind generally bundled with sound cards) and have been looking to upgrade them, look no further. The J-520AV are very reasonable in price for the performance given. 14 watts per channel means that these speakers will never get loud enough to disturb your next-door neighbors, and their magnetic shielding means not having to worry about static discharge destroying your investment (or interfering with your monitor). The case is attractive enough for the office if you like playing your games there. The only true downside is the rather poor location of the power switch and volume, bass and treble controls.

-Ted

bass, and treble controls. The power supply is built-in.

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

Jazz Hipster

1217 John Reed Court
City of Industry, CA 91745
(818) 336-2689
Fax: (818) 336-2489

FLIGHTSTICK PRO'S LITTLE BROTHER.

INTRODUCING THE JETSTICK FROM CH PRODUCTS. FLIGHTSTICK CONTROL AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE.

Novice computer pilots looking for quality performance at a low price will enjoy Jetstick's realistic features. Jetstick, CH Products' low-end, jet-grip joystick, lets you take command of jet, helicopter and racing games.

Jetstick outperforms the competition, it provides greater durability, up to 100 times more than competitive products. Tactile and audio feedback trigger and fire buttons give you quicker response, while ultra-precise elevator and aileron trim controls allow for better accuracy

and more realism.

A two-button joystick, Jetstick offers the same quality performance that computer gaming enthusiasts have come to expect from CH Products.



Jetstick

by CH Products

Available for:	PC and compatibles, Mac
Designed by:	CH Products
Distributed by:	CH Products
Retail Price:	\$39.95

Ease of Use	Installation	Usefulness	Durability
85	N/A	84	80

Jetstick is definitely your basic two-button joystick; there are no frills included. While its return-to-center is quick and its fire buttons feel like they'll last you a few years, it hasn't got the same solid feel as, say, the Flightstick Pro. This is not to say that the Jetstick is an inferior joystick. It simply does not have the same fine flight control as that much vaunted and appreciated joystick, the Mach 1. Having said that, let me point out that the Jetstick is not intended to replace or even surpass the Flightstick Pro; the Jetstick is intended for people whose idea of a flight sim is one built for the sheer pleasure of flying, not one designed to have flight characteristics that are accurate.

-Ted

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

CH Products

970 Park Center Drive
Vista, CA 92083
(619) 598-2518
Fax: (619) 598-2524

WHAT'S THAT ALIEN DOING IN THE HEART OF ATLANTA?

ADD CHALLENGE TO SIMCITY 2000 WITH A SET OF TEN DIFFERENT DISASTERS FROM MAXIS.

You've played SimCity, naturally, and now you can get through any of the different scenarios in a few minutes. So, when SimCity 2000 came out, you tried building a couple of towns yourself, then went through and solved all of the pre-made scenarios there as well. If this is the case and if you're spoiling for a new challenge, the SimCity 2000 Scenarios Vol. 1: Great Disasters disk is for you!

Created to add more challenge to SimCity, this disk of new disaster scenarios are provided to give you the ultimate SimCity 2000 challenge. You'll have to fend off floods, battle pervasive pollution, run for cover as hideous giant aliens attack and discover the best way to protect your school system when mother nature decides to grow a fashionable volcano on your prime downtown real estate.

The scenarios are easy to use and install. Once you've copied them into your scenario directory or folder, simply start the game and choose to play a scenario. Your new challenges await you in the menu, so click on one and start fixing those problems!

The scenarios included in Vol 1: Great Disasters are: a series of earthquakes



Choose any of the ten new scenarios to see if you have what it takes!

SimCity 2000 Scenarios by Maxis

Requirements:	4MB RAM, SimCity 2000
Available for:	PC, Macintosh
Designed by:	Maxis
Distributed by:	Maxis
Retail Price:	\$19.95
Hard Drive Space:	2 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

and fires in San Francisco; a UFO invasion in Atlanta; a volcanic eruption in Portland; a microwave power beam

mishap in the middle of Silicon Valley; rioting in the nation's capital; a massive nuclear meltdown in downtown Manhattan; flooding in Davenport, IA (just like last summer!); pollution in Chicago at the turn of the next century; firestorms destroying prime Malibu beachfront property; and a hurricane in Homestead, FL.

So if you are the best when it comes to city planning, see if you're the best at city rescuing. These ten scenarios will keep you busy, at least until Maxis releases the next volume!



Portland looked like such a nice place to live, that is until a volcano sprouted up in the middle of the downtown area! See if you can minimize the damage and get people to move back in!

YOUR FIRST TENTATIVE STEPS INTO A WHOLE NEW WORLD.

WAITE GROUP'S VR BASIC OFFERS YOU A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE OF COMPUTER GAMING.

Virtual reality is one of the most commonly heard phrases regarding computer software, particularly computer games. No one has really determined exactly what VR will be, but many have offered their opinions on the eventual place that games and software will get to. VR Basic is the Waite Group Press' spin on virtual reality. More than just

offering a glimpse, however, VR Basic is a powerful scripting language that enables you to create a virtual world and then walk or fly through it.

The VR Basic scripting language contains 55 different statements and functions that allow you to make your world. To further assist you, the product also comes with a reference manual that gives some advice regarding the construction of virtual space. The language can render over 20,000 polygons per second and allows over 2,000 polygons per scene.

Your world can be created more easily by using any combination of the dozens of pre-built objects like a working robot, a ferris wheel, a fractal landscape and a world of mazes. Once the world is creat-

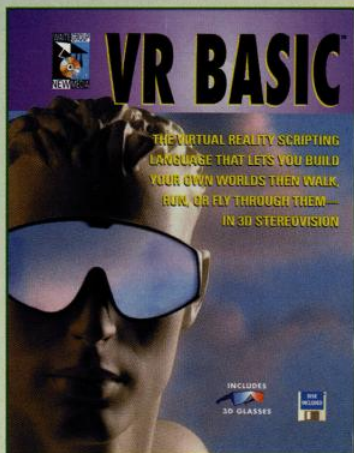
ed, don the enclosed 3-D stereo glasses to watch objects float through your screen in real time.

Virtual reality may not be here yet, but with VR Basic from Waite Group Press, you can get a little bit closer to the way games are going to look in the near future.

VR Basic

by Waite Group Press

Requirements:	386/25 or 486, 640k RAM, DOS 5.0 or better
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Waite Group
Distributed by:	Waite Group
Retail Price:	\$34.95
Hard Drive Space:	5 Meg
No. of Players:	One



Here's your chance to get in on the hottest craze in computer game design!

PREVENT BURN-IN WITH HELP FROM JACK AND CHARLES.

ACCOLADE RELEASES A PAIR OF SCREEN SAVERS THAT ADD A TOUCH OF CLASS WHILE PROTECTING YOUR MONITOR.

There are a lot of screen savers out there, but most of them feature shapeless colored blobs that spin around or fade in and out. When you want something tangible on your Windows screen, you need the Jack Nicklaus and Charles Barkley screen savers from Accolade.

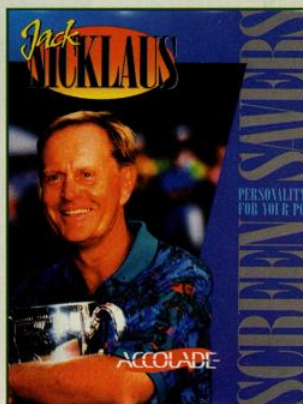
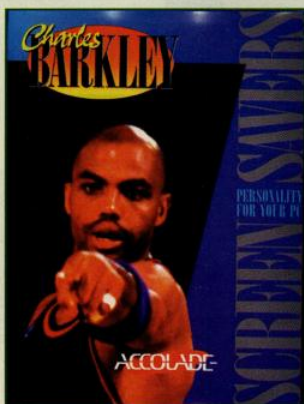
Both of these screen savers offer you a number of high-quality photographs of

these two sports greats and some of the best moments of their careers. See Charles Barkley's monster dunks and game winning shots as well as candid pictures of the basketball superstar off the court. See Jack Nicklaus at his best on the course and see his best as a top designer of golf courses. Or, install both on your system and mix and match pictures from both of the screen savers at

the same time. Choose which photos you want or pick a slide show of all of the different pictures. Whatever you chose, you can't go wrong with these latest methods of protecting your precious hardware.

Jack Nicklaus/Charles Barkley by Accolade

Requirements:	Windows 3.1 or better, VGA, 4MB RAM
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Accolade
Distributed by:	Accolade
Retail Price:	\$14.95 each
Hard Drive Space:	1.6 Meg
No. of Players:	N/A



Charles Barkley wants you to protect your monitor the way Jack Nicklaus is protecting his latest golf trophy! Prevent burn-in and enjoy great sports scenes to boot.

CLEARLY, SOMETHING HAS STARTLED MR. COW,
AND IT AIN'T A PAIR OF COLD HANDS.



YOU GOT A VILLAGE.

FARMS. HUTS. KNIGHTS. PEOPLE TO
BOSS AROUND. AND A COW.

LIFE IS GOOD. BUT THEN YOU GET THESE VISITORS.
THEY'RE FAT. THEY DROOL, BURP, AND SMELL LIKE AN
OUTHOUSE. THEY COME IN HORDES, EATING YOUR 3D
TEXTURE-MAPPED HUTS, TREES, WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND
WORST OF ALL, YOUR COW. YOU TRY TO TRASH THEM



WITH YOUR SWORD, BUT IT AIN'T EASY,
AND THEIR GUTS GET ALL OVER YOU.
LIFE STARTS TO SUCK. YOU'VE MET

"THE HORDE", MY FRIEND. AN ORIGINAL GAME WITH CD-QUALITY LIVE
ACTION VIDEO, DIGITIZED MUSIC AND DISGUSTING EATING SOUNDS. AND A
CAST OF ACTORS WHO CAN ACTUALLY ACT; LIKE
KIRK CAMERON AND MICHAEL GREGORY.
YOU BUILD WALLS, MOATS, AND DEATH



PITS. AND YOU HIRE AN ARCHER TO HELP FEND THEM OFF. AGAIN THE
HORDE ATTACKS. YOU SAVE THE COW, BUT THEY EAT YOUR HUT, YOUR

THE HORDE™



CORN CROP, AND THAT GIRL NEXT DOOR YOU HAD YOUR EYE ON.



HOW LIFE REALLY SUCKS. AND IT AIN'T ABOUT
TO GET ANY EASIER. THE EVIL HORDLINGS
GROW BIGGER, FASTER, EVEN SMARTER.

(AND YOU HAVEN'T EVEN MET THE EVIL CHANCELLOR YET.)

DEAR READER, WE PRAY YOU'RE THE SORT WHO LEARNS
QUICKLY. 'CAUSE THIS STUFF'S

CRYSTAL DYNAMICS™

HAPPENING ON 32 BITS. ENJOY, MY FRIEND. AND GOOD LUCK.

**IBM PC
PC-CD
& 3DO™**



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SNOOPY HELPS MAKE LEARNING FUN!

THE CARTOON CREATIONS OF CHARLES SCHULTZ COME TO LIFE IN WINDOWS IN AN INNOVATIVE GAME.

Among the best loved characters ever created are those of Charles Schultz's Peanuts comic strip. The antics of the lovable loser Charlie Brown and his beagle Snoopy as well as all of their friends have long delighted adults and children in the daily newspaper, in books and on television. Now your kids can capture some of the magic of the Peanuts characters with any PC capable of running Windows!

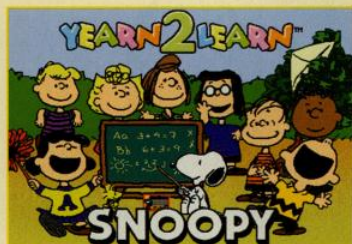
Image Smith's Yearn 2 Learn Snoopy offers five different sections of games for kids to help them learn a number of different subjects and skills. Math, word, music and reading games of various difficulty and style are presented along with a facemaking utility that teaches creativity skills.



Music and reading games are just two of the possible activities in Yearn 2 Learn Snoopy.

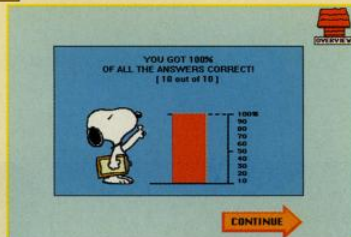
Yearn 2 Learn Snoopy by Image Smith

Requirements:	386 or better, 256 colors, 4MB RAM, Windows
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Image Smith
Distributed by:	Image Smith
Retail Price:	\$34.95
Hard Drive Space:	16 Meg
Age:	3-10



Kids often have trouble with mathematics, so Yearn 2 Learn Snoopy contains three different math games that teach addition, multiplication, subtraction and division skills in easy-to-understand word problems reinforced with pictures. There is also a two-player game that allows each player to compete at his or her skill level.

Especially for pre- and early readers, this product teaches letter recognition and word recognition with Spelling Ace. Taking the role of Snoopy as the Flying Ace, kids catch flying letters to spell basic vocabulary words. Once word skills have been mastered, kids can tackle the reading game. Talking Peanuts cartoons are filled with hot spots that reward the player with humorous sounds and animations. Kids can



As you play, Snoopy himself will keep you posted on how well you are doing at each task.

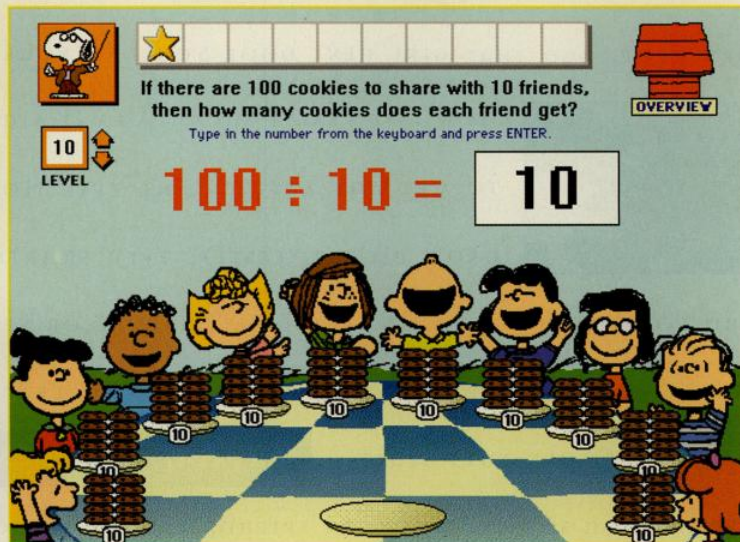
listen to the text as each word in the cartoon is spoken.

Music skills can also be learned by connecting different pieces of music together to make a huge number of possible melodies.

Finally, creative skills can be learned with Face Maker. Create a number of strange and funny faces by using the pre-drawn face parts or by creating your own. The only limits are those of your child's imagination as he or she develops a desire to learn with Snoopy and the rest of the Peanuts gang and Image Smith.



Make faces with the pre-designed parts or those of your own imagining.

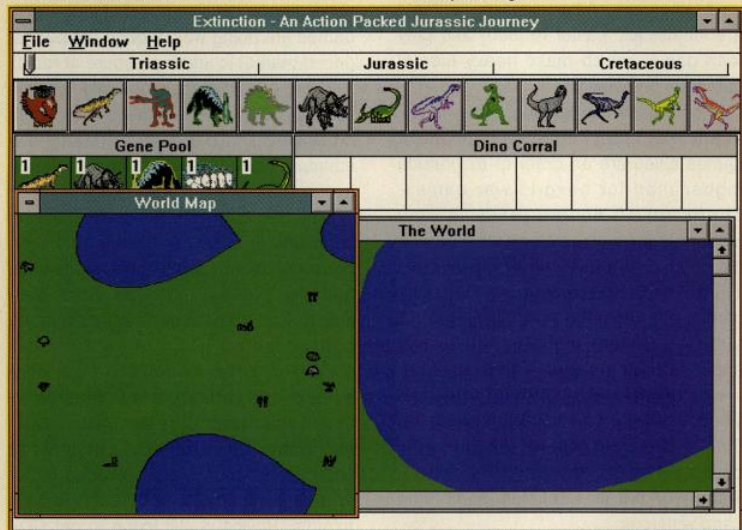


CHECK OUT SOME REALLY ENDANGERED CREATURES...

EXTINCTION: THE LAST GAME THEY EVER PLAYED FROM IDP OFFERS WINDOWS USERS A JURASSIC LARK.

No one really knows what happened to the dinosaurs, but theories of why they became extinct abound. But for millions of years, the dinosaurs held sway on the Earth. You can explore the mysteries of their life and disappearance with Extinction: The Last Game They Ever Played from IDP Software.

As you progress through prehistory, the number of predators and dangers increases. Lightning reflexes will be required to keep your thunder lizards alive. No dinosaur made it out of the Cretaceous period alive, but with careful planning and a little bit of luck, your herds just might!



Extinction is a game that requires both good luck and good strategy to be successful. You create your own herds of herbivorous dinosaurs, then release them out into the world in the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. Terrible calamities like predators, disease, volcanic eruptions and drought can kill off their population. As you guide them through their world, you must avoid the ever present dangers and try to have your herds survive as long as they can.

Extinction

by IDP Software

Requirements: Windows, 386 or better,
2MB RAM, VGA/EGA/XGA

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: IDP Software

Distributed by: IDP Software

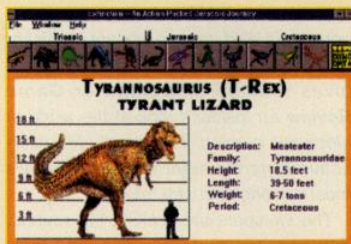
Retail Price: \$49.95

Hard Drive Space: 6 Meg

Age: Any

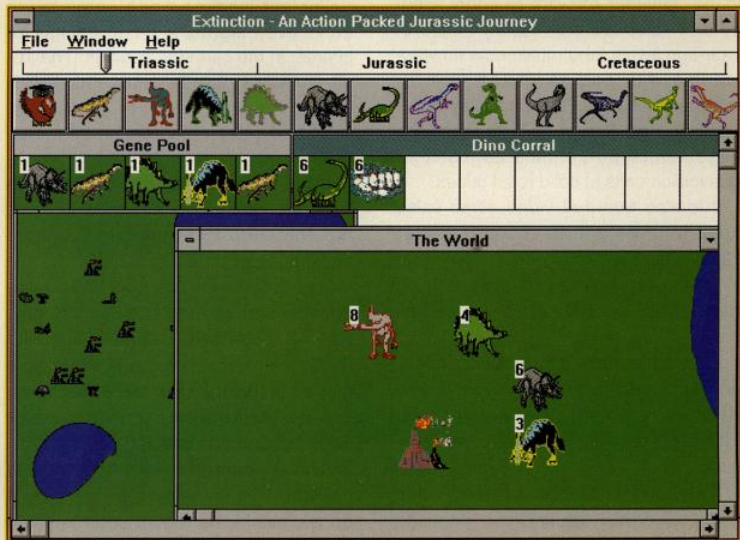


Use the gene pool to increase your number of dinosaur herds.



Interesting facts about dinosaurs and a "Did You Know" game are included with Extinction.

For those more interested in the dinosaurs themselves, Extinction comes with a detailed database of facts and figures about these long-gone creatures. Compare the body mass/brain mass ratio between dinosaurs and humans or see how fast they ran. Learn the theories about why the dinosaurs vanished as well as a glossary of paleontology terms. Extinction also includes a copy of The Age of Dinosaurs by dinosaur expert David Noll. Experience a real-life dinosaur farm in Windows with Extinction from IDP Software.



WILL THE COMPUTER GAME BOOM CONTINUE?

AS CARTRIDGE SALES SLOW, CAN WE EXPECT THE COMPUTER MARKET SHARE TO INCREASE?

*(When company presidents need analysis of hot trends and future possibilities, one of the names on speed dial is "Arnie Katz." Writer, lecturer, designer, consultant and, now, assistant publisher and editor of **Electronic Games**, Arnie gives readers of **Computer Game Review** an insider's look at the world of electronic gaming. This month, Mr. Interactive Entertainment analyzes today's most exciting industry trend.)*

The whispers are making the rounds. You hear the same assessment whenever gaming executives compare notes: Cartridge sales are slowing down, and computer entertainment is on the rise. Computer entertainment veterans have heard this siren song many times in the past, yet they want to believe. They want to see their faith in computer gaming translate into mass market popularity for these products. No one wants to jinx things by shouting "software boom!" but the industry is quietly regaining lost confidence in home leisure computing.

Have they sized up the situation correctly? Yes and no.

Sales trends are unmistakably positive in the computer software category. Floppy disk sales are significantly ahead of year-ago levels, and multimedia funware volume has soared in the last 12 months. Titles like 7th Guest, Day of the Tentacle, and Return to Zork are selling huge numbers—perhaps as much as one million units at solid retail prices.

It is also true that video game sales have faltered during second-quarter 1994. Negative stories are cropping up in the media, and even the street fighting game craze looks like it has passed its peak.

That all sounds good, but there's a danger of getting carried away, of seeing what we compu-players want to see. This is good news, but not a taste revolution.

It's wrong to read slackening video game sales as a repudiation of cartridge

games. The type of interactive contest commonly identified with video gaming is not losing out to the multi-layered simulations so loved by CGR readers:

Simple and colorful action games will always have an audience. And that audience will always be larger than the one for braingames. Arcade action contests are intrinsically easier to learn and play than games which make heavy mental demands on players.

In non-electronic gaming, to cite a relevant example, family-social board games sales are an order of magnitude higher than for hexgrid war games. There are 10 people ready to play Monopoly for every person who'll make the commitment involved in Avalon Hill's Third Reich. That doesn't mean easy games are better than challenging ones, but it guarantees that they will always appeal to more people.

Don't lose any sleep over that fact. We don't play computer games because they are the most popular. We love them because they give the grey cells a stimulating workout that satisfies something deep within us.

Current weaker video game sales don't even signify a basic decline of interest in the cartridge concept. The 16-bit consoles, the Genesis and SNES, have done well. The two rivals have combined sales of more than 15 million units in this country. Look for a fourth-quarter upswing that could still make 1994 the best video gaming year since the Nintendo Entertainment System broke through in the late 1980s.

Media hype for 32- and 64-Bit systems, including Atari's Jaguar, Sega's Genesis upgrade and Saturn, and Nintendo's Project Reality, is the single biggest problem for the 16-Bit machines. The next-generation cartridge systems raise consumer expectations and also convince some prospective buyers to hold their money instead of spending it on a console that could soon become

yesterday's news. I confidently predict that sales will turn upward again once the hardware situation clarifies.

That doesn't mean computer entertainment can't expand at the same time. Computer software sales grew dramatically in the 1978-82 period, the same years video games went through the roof.

A sustained computer entertainment software boom is not only likely, but in my opinion, is a sure bet. My only warning is that it may not be everything we'd all wish.

The most important fact about this new boom is that most of the steam comes from multimedia, not the conventional floppy disk segment. Floppy disk games are doing well, though the budget priced market is under pressure at retail.

There are now approximately five million CD-ROM drives installed in the United States. That's a good market by any standards. But it's still one-third as large as the video gaming audience.

The gap may be closing. If expansion continues at the current rate, we'll soon be talking about a computer multimedia audience that rivals the video game market in size and exceeds it in spending power.

CD-ROM has benefitted from consumers' lukewarm attitude to other multimedia machines. TTI has gone away, taking the TG-16 CD with it. The Sega CD hasn't become a dominating factor and Nintendo's Project Reality is in a muddle. Philips is still trying to get CD-I on track, and even it is now supporting CD-ROM. Finally, the 3DO hasn't yet caught on with shoppers.

Meanwhile, computer multimedia technology is getting stronger. Manufacturers are shipping double- and triple-speed CD-ROM drives which address the slow access time. Also worth noting is the popularity of Macintosh CD. Entertainment products have always been scarce for the Mac, but it looks like CD has ushered in a new era of Macintosh entertainment. PC is still the main show, but now there's a good second market supporting the Apple system.

So, yes, there is an computer entertainment software boom. My next column will detail where I think this tidal wave is going to take us in the next two years. See you all next issue!

- Arnie Katz

THE GRANDEST FLEET

OUTSTANDING
DESIGN
WINTER
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GAME BYTES
MAGAZINE



QQP
Quantum Quality Productions, Inc.

Only one fleet will be left afloat in this thrilling masterpiece from QQP. Experience the grueling campaigns, the agony of defeat and the exhilaration of VICTORY!!! Develop cultural resources and manage the growth of your population. Allocate natural resources to build missile sites, radar stations, shipbuilding facilities and SUPERSHIPS. It is up to you to destroy your nemesis... or end up in Davy Jones' Locker.

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"The Grandest Fleet" computer game is for IBM PC. It can be obtained through your favorite retailer or call:

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or by writing to:
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A PRIMER FOR THOSE NEW TO FANZINES. . .

WHAT MAKES ELECTRONIC GAMING FANDOM WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED.

Writing this column month after month, it is easy to forget that a dynamic and successful publication like **CGR**—make that check payable to “Arnie Katz,” Mr. Editor—is constantly gaining new readers. It is possible, even likely, that many of those readers aren’t aware of the glories of electronic gaming fandom. So before we get to this month’s fanzines, let’s briefly review the basics.

Electronic gaming fandom is a loosely knit association of enthusiasts (fans), which began to take its current form only about four years ago. The chief fan activity (fanac) is the production of amateur periodicals (fanzines) about electronic games. They are not done to make money, but rather to communicate about a common interest to other fanzine fans around the country and the world. Fanzines, often issued on an irregular schedule, are published by people who like to air their opinions and hear those of others with a similar interest in cyber-play.

Fanzines vary in content according to the whims of the editor. Some are devoted to a single platform, while others are more eclectic. Reviews, history articles, personal opinion columns, and humor are popular in fanzines.

The easiest way to get started is to send for one or more of the fanzines mentioned in this column. Remember that this is a spare time thing for everyone, so don’t be too alarmed if they don’t fill your request as promptly as a professional magazine. Most electronic gaming fanzines are available for a small subscription fee, which seldom covers more than postage, if even that much, but the preferred response is a letter of comment (LoC) or a contribution of written or drawn material.

Dystopia #5

Edited by Dennis Crowley
6 Hill St., Medway, MA 02053
Frequent, \$1 per issue, 12 pages
The editor has discovered profanity. I’m sure that thrills you as much as it

excites him. Dennis goes to great lengths, in an editorial decrying the sneering putdowns in other fanzines, to give that expanded vocabulary a big work out. Big deal. You can find every fault he condemns in others right in the pages of his own fanzine.

That’s too bad, because **Dystopia** could be a powerful insurgent voice if only its editor would get off this ego trip. The reviews are low on content, but rich in opinion. The letter column could flourish if Dennis let others express their views, too.

In Between the Lines #4

Edited by Sean Pettibone
2406 Red Maple Ct., Troy, MI 48098
Bimonthly, \$1 per issue, 12 pages
The humor is a little muted this time around, but Sean’s fanzine is still clever, well-written, and highly enjoyable. It’s the little touches of Pure Pettibone, like the microscopic slogans found in odd corners of pages, that keep **In Between the Lines** irreverent and fresh.

Tops in #4 is the interview with Virgin Games’ Tommy Tallarico. I’m not overly fond of the question-and-answer format for printed interviews, but it does have the overwhelming virtue of letting the reader see lengthy comments by one of the stars of game sound. The long letter column, the no-holds-barred fanzine reviews, and the review section and MJ Lesnick’s humorous “What If?” columns are all good pieces, too.

Like all good fanzines, **In Between the Lines** is still evolving. It’s already good, but it seems destined to reach even greater heights as Sean turns raw writing/editing talent into skill. I like it very much, and you will too if you try a sample.

The Laser #7

Edited by Michael Palisano
2 Rock Ridge Dr., Norwalk, CT 06854
Bimonthly, \$2 per issue, 24 pages
This fanzine shows that a strong personality doesn’t necessarily mean a nasty

one. Michael shines forth on every page, whether he’s talking about his long hard winter or reminiscing about ColecoVision. Yet he maintains a pleasant stance throughout, obviously more interested in discussing the games and trends rather than descending to cheap personal attacks.

The Laser’s first anniversary (anniversary issue) incorporates many text and graphics improvements. His “Voice Module” is particularly engrossing and gives real insight into the person behind the fanzine. The graphics are futuristic and innovative, though lightening up the pages might improve readability.

Michael Palisano flirted with quitting fandom recently. His enthusiasm is back, and **The Laser** is once more a fanzine on the rise. Get on the bandwagon and send for the next one.

Paradox #15

Edited by Chris Johnston, Jason Whitman, Tim Johnson & Justin Schuh
316 E. 11th Ave.,
Naperville, IL 60563-2708
Monthly, \$1 per issue, 12 pages
Although this is a small issue, the fab four are in great form. They serve up a tasty mix of opinion columns, reviews, and material about fandom itself. It also boasts one of the best letter columns in electronic gaming fandom.

Jason Whitman leads off with a short, but intelligent editorial. He touches on several subjects, including praise for fellow fan Noah Dziobek, an update on the embattled Gaming Enthusiasts of America, and a plea for tempering free speech with responsibility. Other highlights include, but are not limited to: Jason’s account of a visit to Bernie’s Diehard Games Club in Arlington Heights, IL, and Chris’ interview with fanzine editor Rich Wiggstone.

Paradox has its ups and down from month to month, but the overall quality is exemplary. The 15th issue gets my top recommendation of the month.

Attention fanzine editors: If you’d like your fanzine reviewed in this column, send it to: Arnie Katz, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107. I read and save every zine sent, and I’ll try to describe as many of them as possible each month.

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HCGF

CHICAGO: MY KIND OF OPERATING SYSTEM.

MICROSOFT GETS SERIOUS ABOUT WINDOWS CHICAGO AND THE GAMES THAT IT CAN PLAY.

The lead story this month concerns the new plans that everyone's favorite computer megacorporation, **Microsoft**, has for the "Chicago" version of **Windows**. The intention is that this new version of Windows is going to be very game friendly. Now, I realize there are a lot of people thinking "I'll believe it when I see it," but this could be the real thing. At the **Computer Game Developers Conference** in Santa Clara, Microsoft announced that it will deliver a new software library and other tools to make creating 32-Bit games with fat graphics for existing and future versions of Windows. Again, I can hear you saying "Yeah, yeah, sure, sure." But listen to this—**Id Software** guru **Jay Wilbur** commented that using the new tools to port **Doom** on Windows was done in a couple of days and "Boy did it look good!" Thanks to this, the **Id** guys are planning a Windows version of **Doom** to be released by Christmas.

In other news, **Intel** and **Duracell** have joined their powerful forces to announce the availability of two "smart battery" specifications. With these specs for the **Smart Battery Data (SBD)** and the **System Management Bus (SMBus)**, portable PC users can expect lower battery costs, more reliable battery-level information and the ability to adapt to the latest battery technology. Of course, I've always wondered why anyone would want a portable in the first place. . .

Aztech Labs knows when they have a good thing going and when that good thing needs to be improved. Thus we are excited to mention the company's recent revealing of the **Voyager** and **Asteroid** multimedia upgrade kits. Both of these kits feature a 16-Bit sound card, Aztech's double speed CD-ROM drive and a bunch of CD-ROM software. The **Voyager** has an MSRP of \$399 and comes with, among other things, **Comanche Maximum Overkill**, **Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis** and **Wired for Sound PRO**. **Asteroid** is tailored more for the beginner and includes four CD-ROM titles including **Day of the Tentacle**.

Everyone who has been in dire need

of hints on **Imagitec Design's Daemongate** will be happy to note that our good pal **Piglet** has been stationed in sunny, wonderful Houston to establish a tech support and hint line. The number for hints is (713) 580-2148. Technical support's number is toll free: 1-800-438-3566, which spells ID-TEKNO (as well as 1-800 GET-ELMO). According to **Piglet**, the tech support line is needed, since he was recently besieged with the problem of one (obviously) novice gamer, who, since the **Daemongate** install instructions never told him to eject his disks, managed to wedge three floppies into his B drive. Sounds like a personal problem.

Almost as funny, but much more serious, the word has come from the **Internet** that a piece of alleged shareware called **CD-IT** is really a dangerous virus. This piece of software has apparently suckered a lot of people in by claiming that it is a utility that can turn a standard CD-ROM drive into a rewritable drive. This is impossible, folks, so don't get taken. This program will do all sorts of nasty things to your system, like crash the system, remain in memory and corrupt important files. It's also transparent to traditional virus checkers. **AVOID, AVOID, AVOID!**

On a more positive note on the bulletin board front, **Galacticomm** has announced the integration of **Chatlink** into its **Entertainment Collection** add-on for the **Major BBS**. This connects hundreds of systems worldwide, providing a service similar to **Genie** or **Delphi**. **Chatlink** is effectively a teleconference on the computer. Be sure to watch your phone bill!

Domark's Flight Simulator Tool Kit will get a boost in a couple of weeks with the release of its first add-on package. This new disk of objects and airplanes will feature aircraft and more from the World War II era. Sounds like that was one of the only things missing from **FST** in the first place. Good call, **Domark**.

For those who can't get enough shareware, a recent CD-ROM product coming soon called **101 Only the Best Games #1** from **Tech Express Software** featur-

ing shareware and demo versions of popular games is coming soon. It's also laden with humorous miscues in game names. Our personal favorites are **Batrayle at Krondor**, **Wolfenstein 3-D** and the unforgettable **Porker Slot**.

Time Warner Interactive, who has recently picked up several new partners, has just signed on software company **Tsunami**. This deal includes taking over the distribution of **Tsunami's** six previous titles as well as the distribution on their next science fiction banger, **Return to Ringworld**. Look for this game around summer.

Activision has just signed on **Peter Lenkov** to develop and write a new interactive game series for various systems including the PC. While the name may not be familiar at first, **Lenkov** is at least partially responsible for the writing on last year's movie **Demolition Man**. According to the folks at **Activision**, the new series is being designed with the possibility of becoming a movie or television series in addition to being a game. It's not everyday we see this sort of reverse licensing in the PC game field.

Speaking of new signings, it's just come off the hopper that **Interplay** has inked a deal with **Steve Jackson Games**. The licensing agreement is for a computer version of **SJG's Generic Universal Role-Playing System** (or **GURPS** for you non-RPG'ers). **Interplay** has also signed on **Informative Graphics**, the makers of **Auto Insight**, **PC Insight**, and **Body Insight**. The deal makes **Interplay** the distributor of these titles in all of their versions including CD and enhanced CD-ROM.

In all the world, there probably is not a company that is as widely known to budding young artistic talent as **Crayola**. Recently **Micrografx** and **Binney & Smith** told of the development of two new edutainment products that will be focused on creativity. Both **Crayola Amazing Art Adventure** and **Crayola Art Studio** provide kids with ways to express themselves on the computer. They sound like fun.

Suncom, better known for joystick and other hardware manufacture, is entering the software market. The company has recently signed an agreement with **Gremlin**, who once had a licensing agreement with **Konami**. Now, all of those **Gremlin** games from Europe will appear here with a **Suncom** label.

That covers this end of the computer universe for this month. Tune in again in thirty days to hear the latest and greatest news and views from inside the industry and out.

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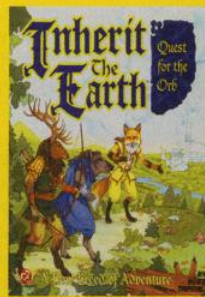
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'UNDER A KILLING MOON' Transports you to the virtual world of the feisty detective Tex Murphy. New feature allows you to save and splice scenes together. Digitized voices & sound effects and an amazing level of detail & freedom of movement make this game visually & aurally stunning. CD \$55



'7th GUEST: 11th HOUR' Sequel to 7th Guest except the stakes are higher, the puzzles more clever and the return visit even more unsettling. Solve puzzles and investigate clues that take you through Stauf's haunted house with movie-like plot twists, special effects and music soundtrack. CD \$54



'INHERIT THE EARTH' A fantasy adventure that will introduce players to a new world of breath taking scenery and excitement...Earth. Accompany Riff the fox as he attempts to uncover the mystery surrounding an ancient human artifact. Features intuitive interface, puzzles and overhead perspective. \$45

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WHAT'S RAY TRACING AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

PLUS, OUR VERY OWN MICRO-MEDIC GETS DOWN AND DIRTY ABOUT LEARNING THOSE FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

Greetings, crew. We've got a couple of very interesting questions this time out that are likely to consume most of our space. One reader requests a primer on the latest in graphics technology, while another offers a stinging indictment of the American education system. So let's get on with it...

Q: Okay, you've explained all about bit-mapping and polygon graphics, now tell me about texture mapping. What exactly is this and how does it work? Also, what is ray-tracing and can you name a game that makes use of both of these technologies?

Todd Aurbach
New Orleans, LA

A: All right, Todd, we'll try and keep this simple so we both know what I'm talking about. Texture mapping is a process whereby the graphic designer first creates a polygon-based skeleton, and then texture maps a surface onto that polygon. Consider the buildings seen in *Origin's Strike Commander*, for example. These gleaming, realistic looking structures were created by first drawing the building's frame. Next, a texture map of the surface of the building was created, complete with highlights, reflections, etc. Finally, the texture map is literally wrapped around the skeletal framework, much as one might gift wrap a birthday present.

Another excellent example of texture mapping in the cartridge arena can be found in Atari's *Trevor McFur in the Crescent Galaxy* for the Jaguar. The game offers a spectacular variety of texture mapped asteroids and other space debris.

Ray tracing is a technology that, at its highest level, involves constructing a model of, for example, an aircraft. This model is then literally traced by lasers which determine how the object looks from every angle, how it reflects light, etc. These days, however, there are ray tracing programs which can do pretty

much the same thing without all the lasers. A good example of a ray-traced object is the Apache combat helicopter in Electronic Art's Desert Strike.

Q: I'm a sophomore in high school with an interest in computers. I mostly play video games now, but several of my friends have computers and I have been experimenting with them and find they are fascinating. As a result of my interest, I decided to take an introduction to computers class at my school. What a mistake! The teacher has us moving turtles or something around a screen to draw lines and we are learning BASIC but I still don't feel I'm learning anything about how to use a computer and what I should get? Is my teacher right when he says that I have to learn this programming stuff before I can really understand how to use my computer? If you were me, what would you tell my teacher?

Name Withheld

A: If what you say is true, I would have to agree that your teacher is indeed fishing the wrong end of the creek in teaching programming—no matter how simplified—in a course which is supposed to form an introduction to computers. And Turtle Draw?! I haven't seen that used in ten years, and it's been almost that long since anyone mentioned BASIC.

The point is this: if you were taking an Introduction to Media course, would they teach you how to build a television—or fix them? When you take driver's ed, you're taught to drive a car, not work on an assembly line in Michigan putting them together.

In any introductory course, it is important that the students comprehend the underlying theory behind the subject being taught. But it is far more important that students are taught to use their computers. They should be taught about RAM and ROM; about hard drives and floppies; the differences among various computers and operating systems;

understanding the most important types of software, such as the database, spreadsheet, etc.

The vast majority of drivers cannot design or build a car; most music fans aren't especially well versed in music theory—nor do they need to be; and the vast majority of computer users will never write a single program as long as they live.

Therefore, if I could give your teacher some simple advice, it would be to concentrate on teaching his students how to use the computer, rather than wasting time on antique programming languages. Save that for the Introduction to Computer Programming course.

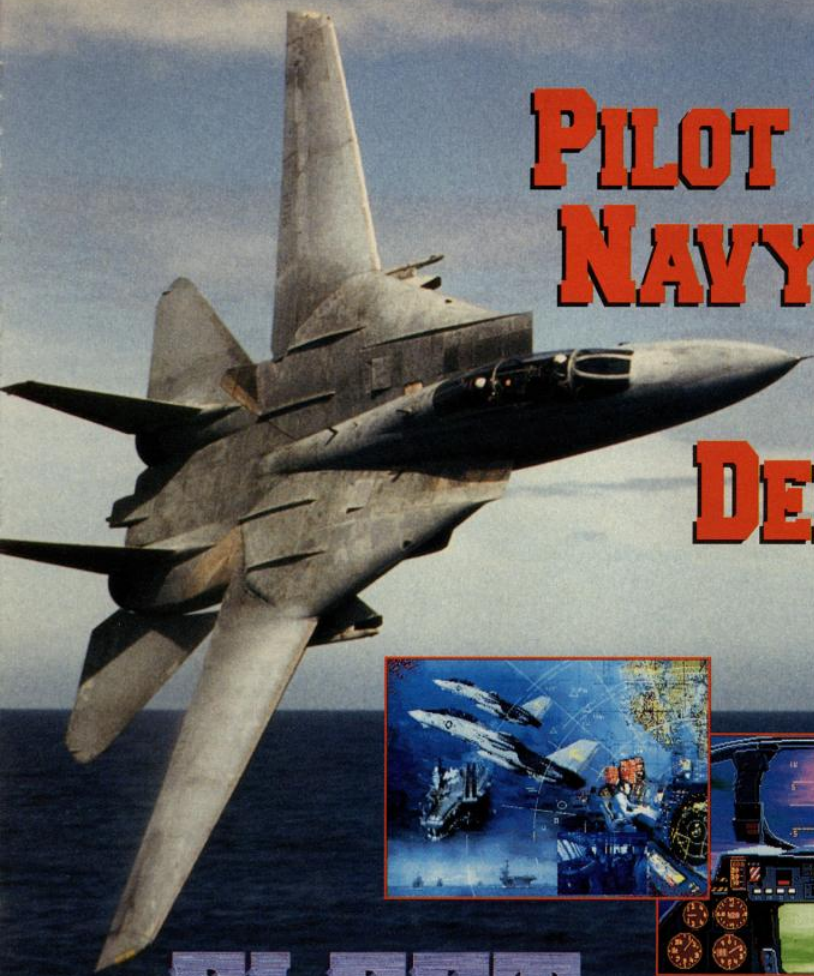
Q&A Quickies: And speaking of computer education, according to a report published recently by the SPA, there are fewer than four and a half million computers installed in schools and school districts. If you'd like a breakdown by system, the '93 Computer Industry Almanac reported that the number of non-antique systems is much lower: 755,170 MS-DOS and just under two million Apples. The rest are Commodores, TIs, Ataris, and other long-outmoded machines.

When you realize that almost every child in school today will have to have some working computer knowledge to function in the High Tech Future, these numbers are just appalling.

Finally, several readers have asked a question that I thought I had already answered, but since I can't locate it in either **CGR** or **EG**, we'll do it again. To my knowledge, the first computer game to use "animated" digitized graphics was MicroLeague WWF Wrestling (MLSA) which was programmed by Mike Riedel of RSP, Inc. The game used a series of still images taken from actual WWF video footage, which were then run as a sort of animated slide show, with each move taking up to seven frames. The game was designed by Subway Software, but the innovation of using actual digitized images was Riedel's, and the game was first released in the mid-80s.

And that wraps it up for this installment. Remember to send those Qs, comments, etc. to: The Game Doctor (CGR), 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.

Aloha!



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002

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE?

REAL SCIENCE AND STATE-OF-THE-ART GAMING TECHNOLOGY MESH IN THE LATEST SPACE BUILDER, SIERRA ON-LINE'S OUTPOST.

Outer space is a big place. There's generally millions, or at least hundreds of thousands of miles between non-man-made objects in space. However, objects in space collide more frequently than we might be comfortable with. Meteors enter the Earth's atmosphere every day, and the pock-marked surface of the moon is evidence of the number of times our sole natural satellite has come in contact with other bodies. It is theorized by many that the dinosaurs were wiped out by the repercussions of a meteor striking the Earth.

It's also been the premise of several of Hollywood's science fiction movies, notably *Meteor* and *When Worlds Collide*. It's also the premise of Sierra On-Line's latest floppy and CD-ROM game, *Outpost*.



Outpost

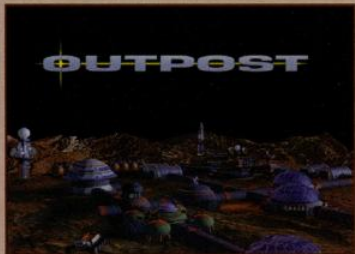
by Sierra On-Line

Game Summary

As the Earth continues into ecological decline, space ships are sent throughout the galaxy to find a suitable place to restart humanity. You must locate the right planet and do whatever it takes to survive or the human race will be wiped out. Take care you don't get any weird infections.

Requirements: 386/25 or better, Mouse,
4 Meg RAM, Windows
Sound Support: Most major sound cards

Available for: PC and compatibles
Designed by: Sierra On-Line
Distributed by: Sierra On-Line
Retail Price: \$69.95
Theme: Builder
Release Date: June, '94



A meteor is headed directly on a collision course with Earth. While much of the populace panics, cooler heads devise several different plans. The first concerns a mission that should be undertaken should all else fail. You have four probes that can be launched out into the galaxy in the hopes that you can find a planet close enough to Earth in size, distance from the sun and atmosphere. It's a good idea to send the probes in the same general direction, since you only have a limited amount of fuel. Planning here is critical, since you aren't going to be able to return for anything you forgot. You have limited space, and while it is tempting to bring back up supplies of everything, there are some items that won't be able to make the trip. You have to choose between various satellites and probes, seeding facilities that help prepare the planet for your arrival and more. You need a lot more than you can take with you. Like we said, you have to plan carefully.

While the preparations are being made for the launch of the colony ship, other plans are being devised to destroy the meteor before it impacts the planet. In spite of the success in the simulations, in the actual plan it merely split the meteor into two pieces, each of them on



the same collision course. They impact one after the other, and Earth as we know it ceases to exist.

You, long since launched and fueled around the moons of Jupiter, are in slow sleep and unaware of the problems back home. All you know when you awaken is that there has been no contact with the Earth and that you are now orbiting a planet that, while it shares many characteristics with the world of your birth, is far more hostile, far more powerful and far more frightening than anything you have ever encountered.

In orbit, you plan to make your descent onto this new world. Before going down, send out probes to check on the atmosphere, weather and to determine the characteristics of the sun. What you face now are conditions so terrible they make the Sahara look like Club Med. Blistering temperatures, 300 mile per hour windstorms and meteor showers (of a smaller variety) will plague you.

Use technologies based on hard science to research robots and build new facilities housed underground and away from the deadly elements. Genetic research will lead you to methods for preventing plagues as well as new food sources that can survive on your new home or that can be grown hydroponically underground.

As is the case with any human endeavor, some of your colonists may decide that they know how things ought to be run better than you do. Should this happen, they will break away and form their own rebellious colonies elsewhere on the planet. Now, as if the planet itself weren't trouble enough, you've got to compete with your former shipmates for food, water and even air.





Outpost has been created by Bruce Balfour, a former NASA employee. Balfour drew on his time at NASA to develop the future technologies in Outpost. All of the science in the game is based on current NASA research on planetary science, robotics, terraforming and interstellar spacecraft design. Balfour was assisted by programmer Greg Tomko-Pavia, who once was a member of the Galileo Navigation Team and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Tomko-Pavia provided assistance in the form of orbital calculations, relativistic effects and spacecraft design. Using the expertise of these two designers, Outpost has been designed to be as realistic as possible with current information.

Before working on Outpost, Balfour helped design the second game in the Laura Bow series, the Dagger of Amon Ra. He has also worked on some computer game classics, including Battle Chess and Wasteland, both produced by Interplay.

While at NASA, Balfour was a systems manager at the Ames Research Center, which enabled him to work on a number of different projects for the Space Sciences Division. Among those projects were artificial intelligence applications with regard to future space probes, eval-



uating proposed space stations and an infrared shuttle imaging experiment operated from NASA's flying observatory. Because of this experience, Balfour had a lot of detailed studies regarding colonies proposed for Mars, lunar colonies, orbital laboratories, robot facilities, terraforming operations, and artificially intelligent computers. All of this and more have been used in the creation of Outpost.

Outpost will be released on both CD-ROM and floppy disk. With the CD-ROM version, a number of impressive animation sequences have been created to make full use of the Autodesk 3-D Studio rendering software used in the creation of this game. These sequences

took a lot of time to create, but give the game a photo-realistic look. The CD version will also contain digitized voices and a dramatic musical score. As many of these amenities are going to be kept in the disk-based version as possible. The CD-ROM version will be released in early June, with the floppy version coming out hopefully in the same month.

Those who think that Outpost may be a little more than daunting may be surprised to learn that the game will be very easy to play. Our brief glimpse with the game showed us a very simple interface that was easy to operate even without a manual. Of course, the highly technical nature of the game precludes accurate testing without getting to the nitty-gritty, and it's impossible to do that without reading through the documentation (which, as of the time of this writing, is unavailable), but what we could get to, we were impressed with.

Outpost promises to be one of the most exciting games of 1994. Additionally, it should do more than just provide a satisfying experience. Based as it is on actual data, Outpost will teach as it entertains. Remember, you are Earth's last hope, and every day you survive is a victory.



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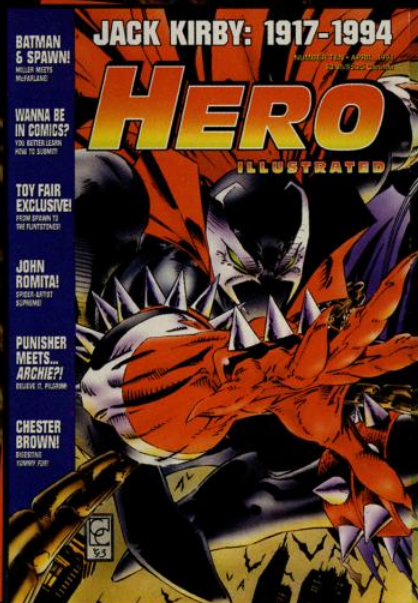
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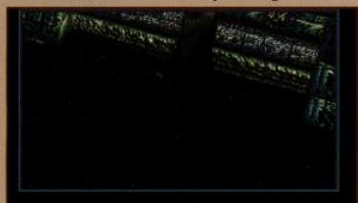


INTERSTELLAR WAR LEAVES HUMANITY OUT IN THE COLD OF OUTER SPACE!

AN ALIEN MENACE TURNS OUT TO BE THE REAL THING. NOW A SMALL COLONY HOLDS MANKIND'S ONLY HOPE TO DISCOVER THE ALIEN LEGACY FROM DYNAMIX.

Human history in the first half of the 21st Century was pretty much the same as what came before it. Technology increased and played an ever increasing role in people's lives, corporations and people fought over the dwindling supply of natural resources. Countries all over the globe launched colonization missions into outer space, both to hunt for important resources and to provide living space for their increasingly crowded populations. As is the case on Earth, the humans in space spent much of their time bickering with each other rather than preparing for the eventual war for survival.

In 2043, human history changed forev-



ENTERING BETA CAELI SYSTEM. PROBE RETURNING

Alien Legacy

by Dynamix

Game Summary

Earth enters a war with an alien race that, for whatever reason, is intent on destroying us. While one group of ships heads off to the alien homeworld, you lead an expedition to colonize far-off worlds in the hope that the human race will live on even if the Earth/Alpha Centauri war proves unwinnable.

Requirements: VGA, 4MB RAM, Mouse

Sound Support: Most major sound cards

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: Dynamix

Distributed by: Dynamix

Retail Price: \$59.95

Theme: Colony Simulation

Release Date: 2nd Quarter, '94



er. What was thought to be a recently discovered comet turned out to be an alien probe. The United States rerouted a ship to intercept the probe.

As the two ships neared, the U.S. ship attempted hailing repeatedly. Suddenly, the alien ship opened fire on the unarmed American vessel, destroying it instantly.

Thus began the war that forced humanity into a cooperative effort of survival. The new-found peace and brotherhood caused a rash of invention and innovation. Eventually, the United Nations launched a ship designed to attack the alien homeworld. In the meantime, colony ships have been dispatched to Earth-like worlds in the hope that



should Earth be destroyed, Mankind would yet live on. In 2119, the UNS Calypso was launched toward Beta Caeli, the furthest out of any colony, and thus the one with the most potential for survival. In 2135, the UNS Tantalus was also sent to Beta Caeli. With innovations in engine design, the Tantalus was scheduled to reach Beta Caeli 21 years before the Calypso.

You were chosen to go on the Calypso, and thus you've spent the better part of the last number of years in suspended animation. You've just been awakened



near Beta Caeli. There is no sign of the Tantalus or of any colonies it should have founded. Still, you've got a mission to take care of.

Alien Legacy opens up a new genre of game play from Dynamix. Faced with the harsh realities of species survival, you must make the hard decisions about where to start colonies and what to do to survive. Out in the depths of space, cut off from humanity, if there is any humanity left in the galaxy, you can only assume that you are the last surviving members of the human race. The decisions you make and the way you react to events will determine whether or not we survive the genocidal alien war!

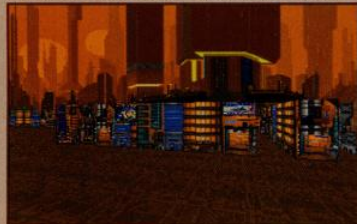


IS THIS WHAT BUSINESS PEOPLE MEAN WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT BIDDING WARS?

NEW WORLD COMPUTING OFFERS ZEPHYR, AN ACTION GAME THAT GIVES A NEW MEANING TO THE TERM HOSTILE TAKEOVER.

In the future, Humankind will conquer the stars and will rule an interstellar empire that extends from one end of the galaxy to the other. As the Earth rules, so do the people on the diverse planets in the empire vie for control. The economic might of megacorporations, huge omninational conglomerates of incredible wealth and power, battle for dominance of each world in the galactic empire.

While the battles take place on many levels, the majority of them occur in and around the Zephyrs, state-of-the-art hovercrafts driven by various combatants on the Interplanetary Battle Circuit. These futuristic mercenaries fight wars in gladi-



Zephyr

by New World Computing

Game Summary

According to New World Computing, in the future, business decisions will be made by armed tanks at twenty paces. Pilot a high-tech hovercraft through a number of landscapes so that your megacorporation comes out on top in vying for control of several planets in a galactic empire.

Requirements: VGA, 4MB RAM, Mouse

Sound Support: Most major sound cards

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: New World Computing

Distributed by: New World Computing

Retail Price: \$59.95

Theme: Racing/Combat

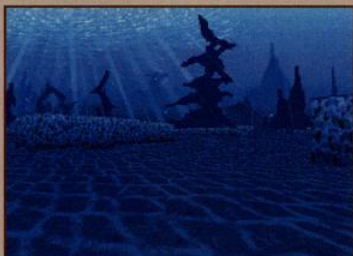
Release Date: 2nd Quarter, '94

atorial arenas where the stakes are world domination on any of more than a dozen planets.

Players take the role of one of these Zephyr pilots in this arcade tank simulation. Play alone to learn the basics. For an added challenge, take on the computer. For the ultimate test of skill and strength, you can play up to five other opponents over a network or modem.

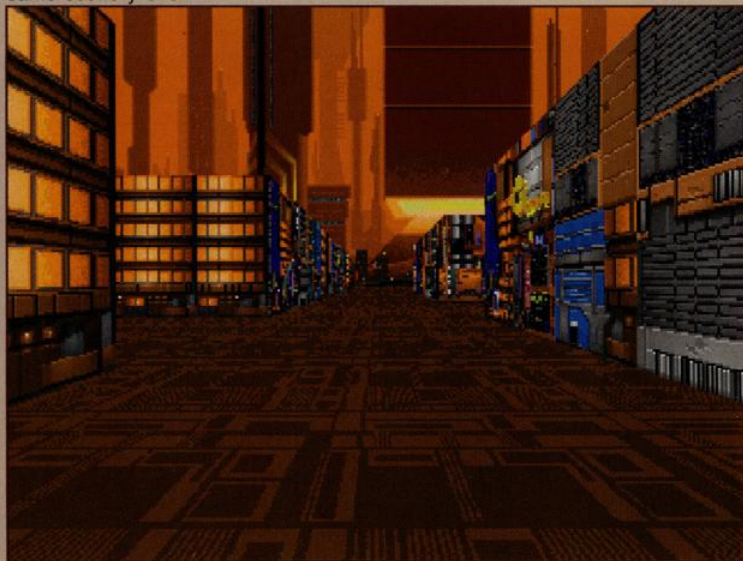
Zephyr features full-screen 3-D rendered tank combat with graphics that include hundreds of rendered objects. Players of all skill levels will find a challenge here, as Zephyr comes with a strong AI that allows it to present the best challenge it can no matter what level of play is selected.

You won't get bored looking at the same scenery over



and over, because Zephyr contains thirty-six different alien landscapes on which to play hide-and-seek with the enemy force of hovercrafts. Also, Zephyr has a complete soundtrack and dozens of digitized sound effects to round out the gaming experience.

If you want a game that will let you blow off some steam by blowing up some bad guys or if you want to get lost in a story as well as have some arcade action, look for Zephyr.



INHERIT THE EARTH: THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY THIS ISN'T.

NEW WORLD COMPUTING TAKES A SHOT AT AN ORIGINAL AND ENTERTAINING ADVENTURE GAME WITH ITS LATEST EFFORT.



ensure his successful return. Joining Rif on his journey are some unlikely travel companions: Eeah the Elk, proud and vain, right-hand man to his commander Lieutenant of the Woods, and Okk the Boar, whose failing on guard duty has placed him in this most shameful and distasteful task.

In trying to prove Rif's innocence, play-

Excerpt from **The Book of Hands**:

"We see the sky, we see the land, we see the water, and we wonder—are we the only ones? Long before we came to exist, the Humans ruled the Earth. They made marvelous things, and moved whole mountains. They knew the secret of Flight, the secret of Happiness, and other secrets beyond our imagining.

The Humans also knew the secret of Life, and they used it to give us The Four Great Gifts—thinking minds, feeling hearts, speaking mouths and reaching hands.

We are their children.

They taught us how to use our hands, and how to speak. They showed us the



joy of using our minds. They loved us, and, when we were ready, they surely would have given us the secret of Happiness.

Now, we see the sky, we see the land, we see the water that we are heir to, and we wonder—why did they leave?

Do they live still, and whence? In the stars? In the depths of the ocean? In the wind? We wonder—was their fate good, or evil...

...and will we share the same fate one day?"

This is the premise which begins the game *Inherit the Earth*. Humans have uplifted the animals to sentience, and now are gone from the Earth. The technologies left behind have aided the animals in their quest for self. But now one of the Human artifacts has been stolen...

You must guide Rif, a young fox, through his quest to find the Orb of Storms, a powerful device that can predict the weather. Rif has been accused of stealing the Orb; now he must find the Orb in order to be reunited with his life's love, who has been taken captive to



ers will interact with scores of characters, solve dozens of puzzles, and explore over a hundred screens of indoor and outdoor terrain. Surprising plot twists, mystery and danger will keep even seasoned players on the edge of their seat. A General Audience rating plus an easy-to-use interface make this nonviolent game perfect for the whole family. The introductory sequence is perfect viewing for younger children, as (at the time of this writing) it is over ten minutes long and very entertaining.

Inherit the Earth

by New World Computing

Game Summary

Inherit the Earth is an animated interactive adventure for the whole family. Special features include full screen animation and interactive dialogues combined with enough mystery, danger and plot twists for hours of fascinating game play. Carries a General Audience rating due to its nonviolent nature.

Requirements: 286, 4MB RAM, Mouse, VGA, DOS 5.0

Sound Support: Most major sound cards

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: New World Computing

Distributed by: New World Computing

Retail Price: \$59.95

Theme: Adventure

Release Date: May, '94



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THE NAMELESS ONE HOLDS YOUR GODS IN CHECK.

A MYSTICAL LAND IS DYING AT THE HANDS OF A WIZARD WITH NO SENSE OF HONOR. YOUR PARTY IS ALL THAT STANDS IN HIS WAY.

The wizard who became known as The Nameless One was filled with a reckless ambition as well as dangerous paranoia. So jealous was he that he guarded even the knowledge of his name. While every other great wizard of the land pledged their allegiance to one of the four gods who held sway over the four houses of the magical wheel, The Nameless One felt he was above that.

Rather than cooperate, this wizard tinkered with the fringes of the magical veil, the stuff of reality. While other magicians felt this was courting disaster, The Nameless One took no counsel, save his own. He created his own system of magic, and with it began demanding the tribute fit only for the gods.

The people appealed to the other wizards. As The Nameless One worked to



Hexx: Heresy of the Wizard

by Psychosis

Game Summary

A wizard known only as The Nameless One has imprisoned your gods and is destroying your world as you know it. You must venture forth to stop his reign of terror. Hexx is set in a first-person, three-dimensional world filled with monsters to kill and treasures to find. Watch out for the creepy crawlies.

Requirements: 640K, 4MB RAM, VGA

Sound Support: Most major sound cards

Available for: PC and compatibles

Designed by: Psychosis

Distributed by: Psychosis

Retail Price: \$49.95

Theme: Role-playing

Release Date: 2nd Quarter, '94



harm and demoralize the people, the other wizards of Earth, Chaos, Night and Dragon would do what they could to minimize the damage.

The Nameless One worked on a spell of prediction, that, to his chagrin, showed his eventual defeat at the hands of the Council of Wizards. Not willing to submit to this without a fight, he began creating chains of spells that grew to concern the four gods. Each god went to investigate the disturbance, and one by one they were banished from the realm. The other magicians are now held powerless and the Nameless One rules supremely in the land.

This is where your party comes in. Drawn from the assembled ranks of Wizards, Rangers, Warriors and Assassins, you have been chosen to scour the dark recesses of the world to locate the four



Talismans that, reportedly, could be used to return the souls of the gods to this plane. Once found, these Talismans would allow the gods to destroy the Nameless One and restore the realm.

Hexx: Heresy of the Wizard is a new first-person perspective role-playing game from Psychosis. You lead your party of four adventurers on their quest to discover the means to free their lands of its current plight.

On your journey, you will encounter terrible creatures who wish you dead, either because The Nameless One has commanded so or because they're just hungry and you're convenient. Before setting forth, you will choose your party of characters, choosing one of four from each of four different character classes. With this group of people, their talents as diverse as their mindset is similar, you must discover the four Talismans or die trying.



E.T. PHONED HOME AND INVITED JUST A FEW OF HIS FRIENDS OVER FOR A PARTY.

JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE XENOPHOBIC DOESN'T MEAN THAT HOSTILE ALIENS AREN'T SCOUTING EARTH IN ORDER TO CONQUER AND ENSLAVE ITS PEOPLES.

The sightings were few at first, and people scoffed at those who claimed to have seen UFOs. Then the sightings began to increase. Soon, there were few who could say that they hadn't seen strange lights in the sky. Earth was being visited, and often. The visitors left bloody trails in their wake as abductions and mutilations became more and more common. The nations of the world came to the conclusion that something must be done, something that would transcend petty politics and national boundaries. Thus was XCOM (Extraterrestrial Combat unit) born.

As head of XCOM, you'll personally oversee the disposition of your multina-

tional funds. Hire dedicated soldiers to repel the enemy attack man-to-alien. Prepare laboratories for teams of scientists to invent new technologies as well as to study the strange artifacts that your soldiers will bring back.

You'll start small, with only one base. Here you'll construct and/or house the implements of battle, from tanks and jet fighters to your loyal personnel. Eventually, you'll house alien prisoners here as well. When the UFO alert is sounded, assault teams in supersonic transports will investigate, backed up by airborne fighters ready to shoot the alien craft down if necessary.

Combat occurs in a 3-D multi-level turn-based environment. Each soldier is given a certain number of action points to use during his or her turn. They'll prime and throw grenades, fire weapons and enter melee. The environment is dynamic (trees and walls crumble or are blown away by



missed shots) as well as multi-levelled (enabling characters to snipe from windows). A successful ground mission not only will recover alien bodies and technologies, but also will advance your soldiers in experience and rank (and skills). An unsuccessful one will cause loss of equipment, funding and soldiers.



UFO: Enemy Unknown

by MicroProse

Game Summary

Operate a multi-national military force to defend the Earth from hostile alien invasion. Build up troop strength to investigate alien sightings while employing scientists and engineers to invent and deploy new technologies. Move troops in turn-based man-to-man combat with the alien presence. Save the earth or else.

Requirements: VGA, 4MB RAM, Mouse

Sound Support: Most major sound cards

Available for: PC and compatibles

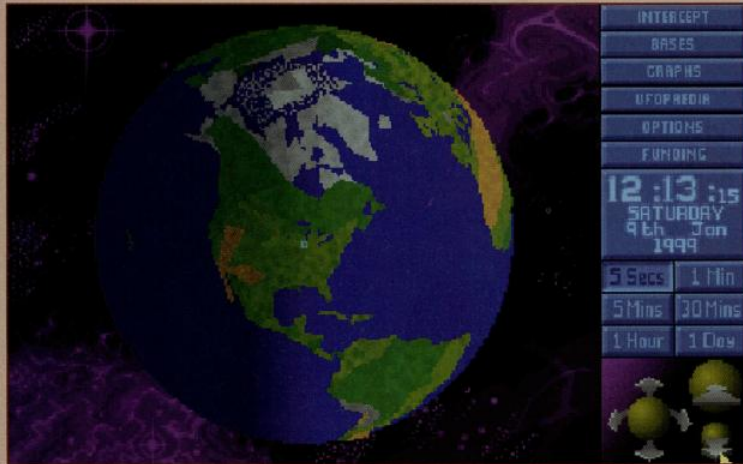
Designed by: Mythos Games Limited

Distributed by: Spectrum Holobyte

Retail Price: N/A

Theme: Xenophobia

Release Date: 2nd Quarter, '94

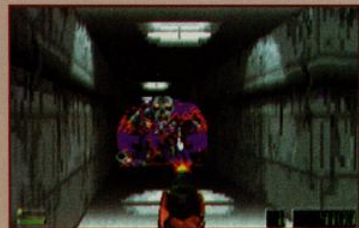


YOU THOUGHT CORRIDOR 6 WAS ROUGH...

CAPSTONE LICENSES THE WOLFENSTEIN 3-D ENGINE TO BRING YOU THE ACTION AND HORROR CONTAINED IN THE WORLD OF CORRIDOR 7.

In the year 2012, a team of U.S. scientists comes back from Mars with an alien artifact. It explodes, causing a link up that joins our world with another. Now, hideous aliens are pouring through the gateway that exits into a top-secret military facility. As a special agent, you've got to go in there. Down Corridor 7 reside nasties galore as well as the fate of the planet. At your disposal are myriad weapons of varying levels of destruction capability. You'll need them all, since you have to kill everything you see by whatever means possible.

Corridor 7 features technology licensed from Id Software, the makers of



Wolfenstein 3-D and Doom. This new title contains a number of features including proximity mapping, full-screen action, infra-red and night vision modes and more. The aliens themselves don't just fall over and die. They have extended death scenes and while you fight them, they may morph into another being! The atmosphere of the game is chilling as you look down corridors that fade into the darkness. Check your heads-up display to see what's going on around you. Duck into side halls to escape the action, but be careful! The aliens are everywhere.

Corridor 7

by Capstone

Game Summary

Run, shoot and fight your way through 30 floors of aliens and other dangerous foes. Kill everything in your path as you explore a world created using the licensed Wolfenstein 3-D engine. Kill more stuff. Check out a cool HUD. Kill even more things. Find groovy weapons and kill with them.

Requirements:	386/16, 2MB RAM, VGA
Sound Support:	Most major sound cards
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Capstone
Distributed by:	Intracorp
Retail Price:	\$49.95
Theme:	Action
Release Date:	2nd Quarter, '94

If you want to be the one responsible for saving the collective bacon of the planet, you will have to fight your way through 30 levels of action. As you progress, the aliens get tougher and they start coming from everywhere. Only those with the quickest reaction time will have any hope of surviving. Polish up your cannon, folks, because Corridor 7 is going to test you like nothing ever has before! Look for a CD-ROM version of Corridor 7 to be released sometime around mid-August.

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

ADVANCED DIGITAL SYSTEMS	45	NEW WORLD COMPUTING	41
APOGEE	3	NOVALOGIC	IBC
CHIPS AND BITS	75	ORIGIN	OBC
CREATIVE LABS	IFC	PAPYRUS	17
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS	66, 67	PSYGNOSIS	54, 55
DOMARK	5	QUANTUM QUALITY	31, 71
IMAGITEC DESIGN	36, 37, 49	QUICKSHOT	33
IMPRESSIONS	11, 13	REALISTIC AUTOMATION	29
INTRACORP	27	SIERRA ON-LINE	7
LEGEND	25	STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS	43
LOGITECH	59	TITAN GAMES	23
MICROLEAGUE	9, 51	VILLA CRESPO	39
MICROPROSE	20, 21, 57, 77	VIRGIN GAMES	47
MICROSOFT	14, 15,		



GRACE SAUNDERS KIDNAPPED BY BAND OF VICIOUS PIRATES!

HELP EDWARD CARNBY FIND AN INNOCENT CHILD AND AVENGE THE DEATH OF HIS FRIEND IN ALONE IN THE DARK 2 FROM I•MOTION.

waited a second and got my bearings. The goon I'd eliminated dropped a Tommy gun, a clip for it and a flask that made me feel stronger after I drank it.

There were a few more goons up the path, so I tried to sneak up behind a statue I saw by the bushes. One of them started coming toward me and was aiming a gun, but I pushed the statue out of the way and snuck inside the maze of bushes.

This maze was a haven for killer zombie goons. There were about half a dozen I had to quell with my new Tommy. Lucky for me a few of them dropped clips when they died. I also found a rope next to something that looked like a trap door with a red diamond on it. I couldn't budge the door, though.

Further on in the maze I found a grappling hook, which I attached to the rope. Next to the hook there were four trap doors like the one I'd seen earlier, one with each of the four card suits on it. I figured that the diamond I'd seen earlier meant something, so I tried to move that one.



Pick the wrong card and you'll lose more than your ante.

When I did, it fell away and deposited me on the ground in a cavern.

There were a few more creatures here which I eliminated with the six bullets in my pistol. I found another flask and half of Striker's notebook. I also discovered how to open that first trap door using something I found under the chest. One of the things dropped a sword, so I took it.

Back out in the maze, I came across a place where two vines were whipping around violently. I inched up and one of them smacked me pretty hard. Thinking quickly, I drew the sword and started hacking. It took a few chops and the sword broke with my last swing, but I got through. Past the vines was a short guy with a pegleg gun. He hit me pretty badly, but I got him with the Tommy gun. I also took the newspaper clipping I found.

I was now by another statue. Something didn't look right about



Somebody get the gardener! The vines are getting unruly again!

TECH SPECS

Requirements:
640K, VGA, 2MB
RAM

Sound Support:
Sound Blaster and
compatibles

Controller:
Keyboard

Available for:
PC and compatibles

Designed by:
Infogrammes

Distributed by:
Interplay

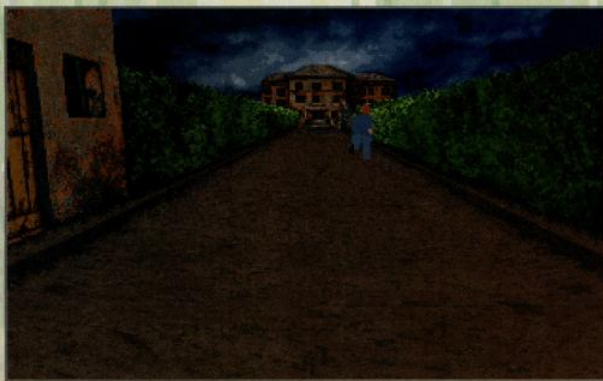
GAME SUMMARY

As Edward Carnby, you must investigate the disappearance of little Grace Saunders and your friend. Face hideous zombies, evil creatures and death at every corner as you investigate the mysterious One-Eyed Jack.

My friend Striker sent me a telegram, which spelled trouble. Striker isn't a telegram kind of guy. The wire said that he was in Hell's Kitchen and that some character named One-Eyed Jack had kidnapped a little girl named Grace Saunders. I don't like it when people mess with my friends. I like it even less when they mess with kids.

So after Striker went missing for a couple of days, I decided to do a little investigation. I've had some experience with haunted and/or creepy houses before, so I figured I knew what to expect. I was wrong.

After I blew open the gate and took care of the goon inside, I



If you don't want to fight the zombies, stick to the right side of the road. If you want to make them eat some lead, hang to the left and start dealing death.

it, so I took the hook and rope combination I'd made and swung it up on the statue's arm. As soon as the hook caught, it yanked the arm down and a door in the base of the statue opened up. I had my misgivings, but it also seemed like the right thing to do, so I climbed down the ladder that presented itself.



A tug on the statue's arm will advance you to the next stage of the game.

Unfortunately for me, I couldn't keep my balance and I tumbled the last few feet down the ladder. I was alright, but both my tommy gun and my pistol slipped out of my grasp and fell into a crevice, gone for good. Looking around where I landed, I found a nickel, a paper bag and a crank. I also found Striker's body.

He had been dead for some time, and while I was tempted to push him over into the abyss so I would not have to look at him (or smell him), I couldn't do that to such a good friend. I did locate the other half of his notebook, though, as well as a pipe cleaner. I fit the notebook pieces together and read it.

The only way out was a locked door, and I didn't have a key. Fortunately for me, there was a key in the door, albeit on the other side. However, using the scrap of newspaper I'd found

outside and the pipe cleaner, I managed to get the key and open up the door to the sub-basement of the house.

There was a goon inside who looked asleep. Carefully, I walked up behind him, inflated the paper bag and then popped it. He jumped, and when he turned around, I pushed the lever and ducked to my right. A barrel came swinging down from the ceiling, missing me by scant inches and taking the zombie out of the sub-basement and into the ocean. Good thing for me he dropped a manuscript, another flask and most importantly, a riot gun. The clock in the room had a strange hole in the side of it. I inserted the crank, turned it, and a door opened up behind some barrels. Around the corner was a box of shells for the gun and an elevator leading to the basement.

Before I went up in the elevator, I took a few minutes and read through all of the books and manuscripts I had found. It was a good thing I did, since at the top of the elevator shaft was a character with an accordion that shot bullets! The newspaper scrap I had used earlier to help get the key into this area was really a contract signed by this guy that said if it should be destroyed, he'd be taken away. So I tore it in half and he vanished. He left me a hook; not a grappling hook this time, but the sort of hook you think of a pirate wearing for his missing hand.

There were shots coming from another part of the basement. I thought I probably should avoid

the area, but curiosity got the better of me. Before I peeked behind the door the shots were coming from, I picked up an old clothes beater.

There were two zombies taking target practice. When they spotted me, they started coming after me, but I held them off with the clothes beater. Once inside the shooting range, I noticed their targets were rotating cylinders with four faces, on each the symbol of a card suit. Remembering my run-ins with large card suits earlier, I punched, whacked and shot them all to the same suit, and a door opened with a goon behind it.

Inside this storage room I found a bottle of whiskey, a flask and a slot machine that took nickels. So, I put the one I'd found into the machine and I won two tokens. I drank the flask and while the whiskey looked tempting, I resisted.



Play the slot machine before you move on from here.

Back out in the main room, another zombie had shown up. This guy looked pretty soused, he was, after all, standing around in his underwear. I crept up and put the whiskey right next to him. When he found it, he guzzled it down and promptly passed out. The bag he had been carrying contained a Santa Claus outfit. It was way too big for me, but I figured a disguise would probably be necessary, so I donned it and prepared to go upstairs to the house itself.



The drunken zombie can be killed or placated with the bottle of whiskey.

FIGHTING

The early portion of *Alone in the Dark 2* is going to involve a lot of fighting. While you will often have the upper hand in combat, a wild miss with either a pistol or a hand weapon could open the door for trouble. Some of the zombie creatures you face will be able to shoot with almost no time between shots. This means you have to aim carefully.

The best advice, of course, is simply to save your game constantly. If you make it through a combat sequence uninjured or with minor (less than five points) of damage, you should definitely save. Saving a game right by combat will allow you to practice your moves.

Save bullets by using melee weapons whenever possible. Good times to use the battledore, frying pan or the like is when your enemies have trouble facing you. Doorways are ideal. Other good spots to use hand weapons are instances when you are faced with only one opponent. The tommy gun is much more useful against groups of zombies.

However, don't be afraid to spend some bullets when you need to. You'll eventually lose your weapons anyway, so get whatever use you can out of them while you have them.



In the caverns, Camby narrowly escapes with his life as he tumbles the last few feet down the ladder. The same cannot be said for his weapons, which are now lost.

KNOW WHEN TO LOAD 'EM

With only one exception, you shouldn't load your tommy gun until it's empty. The gun as well as each clip holds thirty rounds. Putting in a new clip before the old one is empty causes Carnby to toss the old clip for the new. If you aren't careful, you can waste a lot of ammunition this way.

FLASK = FRIEND

There is absolutely no reason to wait to drink a flask. While they can be used to heal damage, they can also be used to add health points onto your total. Drink it now and you have the health to lose. Try to drink it when you're desperate and you may not swig the drink in time. Drink them when you find them.

BOOKS

You will find a lot of reading material in your journey. Be sure you take the time to read everything you can. On several occasions, the books and manuscripts will offer more than just information.

Study the books carefully for potential clues on the whereabouts of other items or characters as well as background info on the game itself.

The disguise worked, at least initially. The first creep who saw me was a short little mug in a chef's outfit. He told me to watch out for the dark squares on the floor, but I didn't pay much attention to him until it was almost too late. I stepped on a dark square in front of this weird statue, and it prepared to skewer me with a trident! I backed up just in time to see the little guy get impaled with the missile! Talk about a lucky break! On top of the statue was a crown that looked valuable.

One of the doors here was locked, so I entered the kitchen instead. Here I got a light snack and picked up a frying pan. It was a good thing, because the cook started attacking me with a blowgun! I used the pan to knock away the darts, and then I used it to knock out his brains. I located a bottle of wine and a bottle of poison that I combined. Back out in the hallway, I slipped this concoction through the hatch in the locked doors, poisoning the guards inside.

Inside the guard room I found a barrel organ that looked perfect for the tokens I'd found. With the yellow token I got a doubloon, and with the brown one, I located a secret door. Inside this room was a bullet-proof vest which I donned immediately, a new tommy gun and a clip for it.

It was time to try the upstairs. There was a goon at the top of the stairs, but a burst from the tommy silenced him. Across the hall was a billiard room, where the goon tossed me a derringer.



Edward Carnby, meet the ceiling. Ceiling, Edward. Using the teleporter is the only way to get from the second floor to the important and dangerous attic areas.

Naturally, I used it to ice him, and the vest I was wearing absorbed all of his shots. I found a sword-stick when he died along with a half parchment and a book.

In the other room upstairs, these two ghostly arms holding swords where standing guard over the other half of the parchment. I fought them off with the sword-stick. I also placed the crown on top of the head of a statue, and a room opened up. Inside, there was a strange amulet that transported me to the attic when I picked it up.



What's a queen without a crown? In this case, she's a bust!

I found a flask and a message in the room I wound up in. Out in the hallway I found another tommy gun, which was lucky since the one I'd found recently jammed up on me and a couple of zombies attacked. Once they were dispatched, I located a key, another flask and a hand grenade, which I couldn't wait to use.

In the junk room, I saw a jack-in-the-box that looked hungry for a doubloon, so I fed it one. As a reward, I got a little pompom that looked like it belonged to the animated jester dummy I found in the next room. Thinking it might want it, I tossed it into an

adjacent garden-like atrium. Sure enough, the harlequin went after it only to be attacked by the resident snakes. I followed the clown into the garden area and found a chimney. Looking down, I figured I could make a grand entrance, so I dropped the grenade down the flue, and after it exploded, I jumped down myself.

After a rough landing and a rougher battle with three characters in the room, I did a little exploring, locating a billiard ball. I took it back up to the billiard room and dropped it into the pachinko-like table against the wall. It popped into one of the holes and revealed a door that opened with the key I'd found in the attic. Behind this door, a great shock awaited me.



One-Eyed Jack may be evil and undead, but he still cuts a dashing figure.

I was trapped in a tiny room by One-Eyed Jack himself! He explained his plans to me and his eventual plans for poor, innocent Grace. As he walked out of the room, I used the armhook I had found in the basement to pry open the door, and I gave chase downstairs. It was here that I was overpowered by the magic of Jack's assistant, Elisabeth Jarret.

So here I wait, in chains and in agony in the hold of Jack's ship. Little Grace Saunders just got up and pushed open the smaller of the two doors in the room and left. I hope she's alright and I hope she can find some way of getting me free from these chains!

-Steve Honeywell



Now you must take the role of Grace to complete the solution of the mystery.

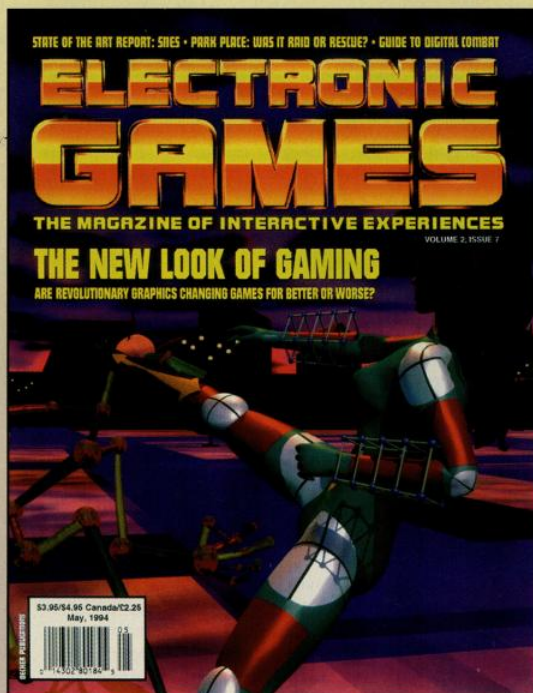
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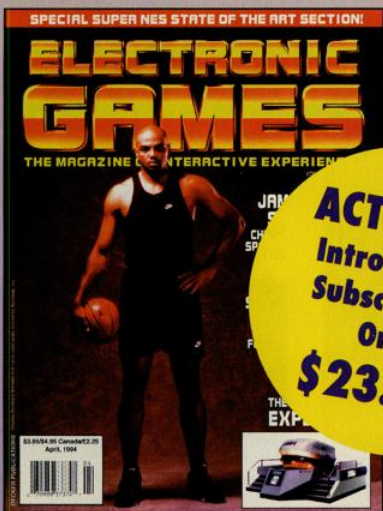
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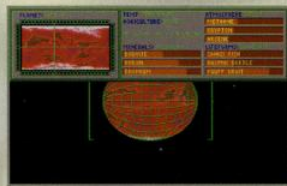
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THE THRILL OF SAVING THE KNOWN UNIVERSE CAN BE YOURS WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR FRIENDS IN NOMAD.



A good scanner is the key to efficiency. The Musin make the best.

ship has been repaired and you, as an agent of Earth Special Intelligence, as being made aware of this under strict oath of silence. You are not only the top candidate for a secret intelligence-gathering voyage, you are the only candidate. You are expected to carry out this task with all the personal integrity you have shown during your previous missions. The project's goals are simple: you will visit foreign planets, meet with their indigenous races and bring what you learn back to Earth. If you are captured by a hostile race or if your mission is discovered and publicized here on Earth, Special Intelligence will disavow any and all knowledge of you and your mission. Good luck.

Races

There are twelve races in the game besides humans. You will need to familiarize yourself with all of them if you want to fully complete Nomad. Notice that I say "fully." It is possible for people to be fanatical about something without knowing the full basis for that thing's existence.

The Altec Hocker are a race of beings who have abandoned their physical bodies to become incorporeal energy beings. They are highly intelligent and have a hive mind—what one Altec Hocker knows, all know. However, individual Altec Hockers specialize themselves in their knowledge and will not discuss something about which they care little. Instead, they will direct you toward the Altec Hocker who possesses an interest in what you are asking about.

The Arden are your first contact. Granger Brin O'Keef is the Arden who repaired the Nomad ship that crashed on Earth. The Arden are the guiding force behind a rather pell-mell collection of races that make up the Alliance. They are generally level-headed, and will answer any of your questions that they

NOMAD

TECH SPECS

Requirements:
286, 640K RAM,
VGA

Sound Support:
Sound Blaster,
Sound Source

Controller:
Keyboard/mouse

Available for:
IBM, compatibles

Designed by:
Papyrus

Distributed by:
Gametek

GAME SUMMARY

An interstellar adventure in trading and combat, NOMAD puts you in the middle of an intragalactic war between life and machine.

Earth is now in contact with extraterrestrials. However, Earth is at a tremendous technological disadvantage because humans do not have the ability to manufacture starfaring spacecraft. Despite this, we do have access to this kind of technology; an alien starship recently crashed and was recovered by Terran Space Forces. We know that you are not privy to this information; the site was in a remote area north of the Arctic Circle and all personnel involved with its recovery were immediately reassigned to solo observational posts in the asteroid belt. The



This Shaasa ship is about to get dusted. His shields may be up (the purplish sphere) right now, but they will soon fall.



A quick scan of a ship will tell you its vitals, including armaments.



Robot away! Hope you sent him down with a good hotbooster.

can. In addition, they are a useful source for Hunter missiles.

The Bellicosians are a nomadic group akin to the Huns and Mongols. They attack other ships ruthlessly, and they will only respect you if you can prove that you are worthy of their respect. Tip: destroy a few Bellicosians when you first encounter them; they will eventually come to admire you. After you have gained their respect, you may trade freely with almost any Bellicosian.

The Chanticleer are a race of crystalline beings. Not much is known about their planet of origin; they live exclusively on vast crystal space stations. These stations are immense, nearly the size of a planetoid such as Earth's Moon. They are an excellent source of information and mid-range weapons.

The Korok is another hive mind race. They are your primary enemy, controlled from an unknown source by the strangely evil Master Control Robot. Nevertheless, because your ship design is unknown to them, they will trade on a limited basis with you. Beware them, though, once trading is done, they will know that you are an enemy and will try to destroy you. In order to win the game, you must destroy the Master Control Robot.

The Musin are essentially sentient chipmunks. They are incredibly vain, except for Bob-clo-eli-mar. Bob is a central character, but locating him is troublesome. In order to uncover the whole story of the game, you must find him. The Musin are a good source of information, and their technological prowess extends to scanners and jammers. The Phelonese (see below) are their sworn enemies. If any Musin asks if you're friendly with the Phelonese, deny it.

The Pahrump will trade for anything. This makes them extremely useful in getting rid of unwanted cargo. They are friendly but very materialistic. The one item they do have that you will absolutely want is the Eye of Kenelm. It can be had from them at a very high price.

The Phelonese are descended from cats (thus the war with the Musin), and are a female-controlled species. You will hear of their men, but you will never get to meet any. They build the very best missile loaders and missiles. There is a schism in their population having to do with the queen and her sister; you will learn about it if you ask enough people. Your primary interest in the Phelonese (besides weaponry) is to get them to join the Alliance. This can be accomplished in two ways: obtain their sacred emerald cho vest and give it to the queen's sister or save enough Phelonese ships from destruction at the hands of the Korok.

The Shaasa are a newly spacefaring race and they are willing to buy almost any amount of gas (which can be collected by a gas-bot). They are difficult to understand because your ship's translator has no record of them; because of this, you will never be able to get the vital information they hold unless you can find a better translator. There is one in the game, but you'll have to trade a goodly amount of facts in order to get it.

The Ursor are big shaggy creatures whose language is based on folklore and the art of



Does your 'bot have what it takes to survive harsh planetary conditions?

storytelling. They are good-natured and friendly; you will find them a wellspring of ancillary information. In terms of what you will want from them: shield boosters. They have two excellent models; the Mighty Fence booster is the second-best one in the game, and the best can only be had from one source and extremely late in the game.

The twelfth race is a secret. If you can manage to get the Universal Translator, you will find out about them from the Shaasa.

Winning the Game

There are several methods to winning the game, but the end result must always be the same: destruction of the Master Control Robot. Herewith, a brief set of scenarios.

TRADING

You can win simply by trading. This is one of the longest routes through Nomad, because it involves a great deal of knowledge of the intricacies of each of the eleven known races. The only way you can gain this knowledge is to interact with

INTERRACIAL ETIQUETTE

There are a couple of races, the Musin and the Phelonese, that do not get along. It probably has to do with their species' origins: the only word of advice I can give is do not attempt to reconcile the two. Don't even mention one to the other.

ZEN AND THE ART OF TRADING

Be very careful of stepping on the very fragile egos of anyone you come in contact with. After you have initiated a conversation with a ship and asked a question, the pilot will always (unless he is a Korok robot) ask if you want to trade. Always answer "yes." Failure to do so will hurt the feelings of the ship's pilot, because Nomad's universe is built around trading. If you ever find that you've hurt someone's feelings, attempt to assuage them with gifts. Musin particularly like Ann Roses, while Phelonese enjoy the IR-300 robots you pick up from destroyed Korok ships. Play around with it; most races have their own individual preferences for gifts. The only exception is the Pahrump, who like everything, including just plain space junk.



Gar-clo is a Musin spy ("clo" is the Musin designator for spy) who is rather blasé about talking to you. Note the half-lidded eyes.

TALK TO EVERYONE

This is probably the most useful piece of information to remember in playing Nomad. Quite often you will be treated to a statement akin to "Who cares? Let's talk about other things." But you will find the occasional person who knows and cares about the topic you are interested in, and that could prove crucial to winning the game. Always give the facts that you know will not upset another person. The only way to find out what someone else will get angry about is to ask that one initial time; after that, simply avoid it when talking to members of the same species. The exceptions to this rule are M'uret, sister of the Phelonese emperor M'Nefer, and Bob-clo-cl-mar. Neither of these two will get upset about anything you could possibly ask them about; they are the two most level-headed NPCs in the game.

ROBOTS AND EXPLORATION

Arch-bots and Spy-bots are very important to winning the game. Ranch-bots, Farm-bots and Gas-bots only help if you are trying to win the game through trading. Pick up and employ good botboosters.

THE WEAPONS OF WAR (and where to get them)

Engine Boosters	Race	Scanners	Race
Go-Far	Ursor	Scent	Arden
Venture	Phelonese	Spector	Phelonese
Vantage	Phelonese	Argus Crystal	Chanticleer
Courser	Arden	Quick-Look	Musin
•Warp	Altec Hocker	•Super-Seek	Musin
Shield Boosters		Jammers	
Siege	Musin	Com-Cloak	Musin
Blast	Arden	Discors	Discors
Quartz	Chanticleer	Tumble	Musin
Energy Fence	Ursor	Tangle	Musin
Mighty Fence	Ursor		
•Stealth	Musin		
Missile Loaders			
Impact	Arden		
Tracker	Arden		
Crystal Speed	Chanticleer		
Crystal Strike	Chanticleer		
Seeker	Phelonese		
Seeker Two	Phelonese		
Missiles			
Hunter	Anyone		
Crystal Velos	Chanticleer		
Death Strike	Phelonese		
Quietus	Phelonese		

Note: Items marked with a bullet (•) are special items which can only be obtained through extraordinary means.

them. Once you know them, you will know what they are looking for, and you will be able to ascertain the value they place on certain key items that are crucial to a successful conclusion to the game.

FACT-FINDING

Fact-finding is almost as painstakingly difficult as trading, but it is one of the most rewarding ways to win. If you are talking to someone, look under the heading "Ask About..." You will find "Facts" listed as a topic. If the person you are talking to has some unclassified knowledge that he or she is willing to give away, you will learn it free of charge. Otherwise, you should bombard each person you meet with the items listed under "Give Fact..." Caution! Some facts will cause the person to whom you are talking to get mad and sign off prematurely. Learn what facts



Chanticleer "home worlds" are giant artificial satellites.

will make persons of a certain race angry, and avoid them in your next conversation with a person of the same race.

BRUTE FORCE

If you're hell-bent for action, this is for you. While you can certainly end the game at any time by destroying the MCR (once you find its location), it is a lot more enriching to finish the whole game. If you can't seem to find enough action by simply entering Korok space and blowing ships up, you can always access any friendly planet's Comnet (with the exception of the Altec Hocker, Shaasa and Phelonese, who apparently have none) and get new and dangerous missions.

Botboosters

Botboosters are a big part of life in the Nomad universe, and you should get yourself some if you plan on doing any serious exploring. They come in two types: regular botboosters and ship botboosters.

There are four regular botbooster types. They are the Aquatic kit (tailored to specific bots) available from the Musin; the Crystal and Crystallium botboosters from the Chanticleer; the Heavy Duty botbooster which you can get from the Arden; and the Ursor's Work-Hard and Work-Long botboosters. These are listed in increasing functionality.

Ship botboosters will get your ship repaired much faster than it can do on its own. In order of increasing serviceability, they are the Ji'iff (from the Pahrump), Stable (Phelonese), Spark-in-Box-Fix-Metal (Ursor), Spiff (Musin), and Rejuv (Arden). Only one bot can work on your ship at a time, so if you've got a Rejuv model, feel free to get rid of any others in your inventory. At a profit, of course. -Ted Chapman

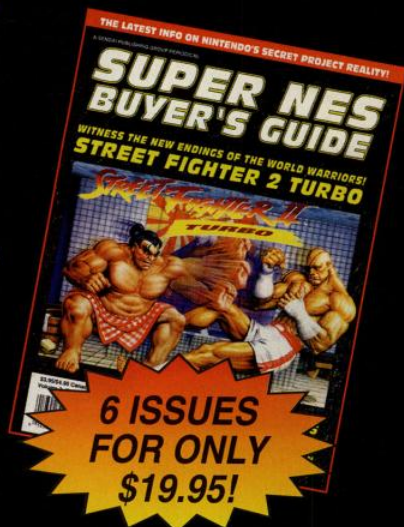


Traveling in the Nomad universe is a simple mouse-click away. Just make certain your ship is at 100% functionality before venturing into enemy territory.

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TECH SPECS

Requirements:
386SX or better
2 Meg RAM
Hard Drive
Mouse

Sound Support:
Adlib, Sound
Blaster, PAS,
MT-32, Sound
Canvas

Controller:
Mouse

Available for:
PC and
compatibles

Designed by:
SSG

Distributed by:
SSG

GAME SUMMARY

The Imperial Japanese Navy faces off against the Allies in the South Pacific in eight actual and hypothetical scenarios covering 1936 to 1946. Watch air power develop from a curiosity to the ultimate deciding factor in naval battles.

FILL AUSTRALIAN SKIES WITH HORDES OF ZEROES.

PRACTICE AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT TECHNIQUES ON POORLY DEFENDED SHORES WITH THE PRIDE OF THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE NAVY.

Carriers at War II covers the adolescence of air warfare, from the awkward early days of battleships and biplanes to the finishing schools of the late Pacific War. Along the way, tactics were refined, pilots achieved mastery and technology drove military science to greater heights. The scenarios span this range, from a hypothetical early meeting of Japanese and British forces before air power's domination of the sea was established to an amphibious assault in the U.S. invasion of Japan.

Given this wide spread of time, it seems odd that the same general tactics work well in each scenario. This is partly a function of hindsight (i.e. we are aware of the awesome power of massed airstrikes, which the admirals and captains of the period were certainly initially unaware) and partly a function of the game's design. The game is, after all, intended to show the relation-

ships of these technological factors, not force the player to reinvent naval doctrine for each engagement. These standard tactics are further already (in most cases) programmed into the behavior of the AI, which gives the player further latitude to experiment.

Given the limited nature of this space, we'll focus on one scenario from the middle of the peri-

od and trust that the general tactics discussed will shed light on similar situations.

INVASION

This scenario is the Port Darwin scenario, chosen with the variant Japanese invasion. This scenario offers even the casual player the opportunity to tinker with the mechanics of amphibious assault with efficiency, rather than survival, at stake.

After selecting this scenario (make sure the proper variant has been selected from the War Room!), set Nagumo to human and leave all other commanders to computer. If you wish, you may command the other Japanese forces as well, but their actions are outside the scope of this discussion.

Nagumo is in charge of four task fleets: one containing the pride of the IJN, four large carriers; one consisting of transports and escort bound for Darwin; one with two CVLs and escorts; and one transport fleet bound for Broome. You'll not need to monkey about with navigation; all four TFs have proper orders already issued. Your focus here is on the conduct of your carriers and their squadrons only.

The two prongs of the invasion leave you with two separate interesting situations, allowing you to practice different tactics. Try the scenario several times, modifying your strategy slightly each time. Port Darwin is a great training scenario for larger operations, like Olympic.



There's nothing like an early morning strike to soften up resistance to an amphibious invasion. Note the risky arming of the Zeros as bombers rather than escorts.

DARWIN

The force invading Darwin has a tough nut to crack. Darwin is protected by nearly eighty planes and bank after bank of anti-aircraft guns. Their naval protection, however, consists only of a single destroyer already busy escorting a large (and helpless) supply force.

Your carrier force will not be able to (and should not, anyway) draw very close to Darwin given the time constraints of the scenario. It will easily be in range to contribute to the invasion.

The invasion force is well in advance of your carriers, and would easily fall prey to the heavy air assets at Darwin except that the spotting abilities of the base there are not the best. Of course, the element of surprise won't hurt either. Even when stirred, however, the planes of Darwin are unlikely to do enough damage to stop the invasion in time.

Your first decision (and most important) is when to launch the first wave of naval bombers. The heavy defenses of Darwin are likely to rip many planes to shreds; however, the earlier the strike, the more planes you'll catch on the ground at Darwin. Long-range bombers are already enroute to Darwin from your land bases. Your best tactic is to time your initial strike to coincide with the heavy bombers already coming, thus massing the base with more targets and bombs than it can handle. Don't send the Vals along on this initial strike; the AA



takes too heavy a toll on them. Save them for a second strike against the naval sighting that the first wave will report: the transports in the harbor of Darwin. Keep the Zeroes as escorts; there'll be too many bandits over Darwin to count otherwise.

Another tactic, more risky than the first, is to wait until Darwin has seen the initial wave of bombers and then issue the strike order. By the time your planes reach the target, the defenders' CAP will be shot down or landing, exhausted. The invasion force is likely to suffer a larger air attack, however, so use with care. If your planes are really lucky and wait long enough after the first strike, you might catch Darwin's air fleet being loaded for that naval strike and nearly unable to defend themselves. Read the sidebar of the next page for additional ideas on protecting your valuable planes.

BROOME

Broome is a very simple operation, made interesting only by the fact that the carrier force is well in advance of the invasion force. The defenses at Broome consist only of two dozen search planes. These will be outfitted with bombs and sent against you, however, and are capable of doing serious harm to the invasion force.

The easiest approach, of course, is simply to bomb Broome before these attacks are launched. Note, however, that this is an auxiliary force. It carries older planes (including the woefully inadequate Claude) and very few of them. The early strike at Broome will be unlikely to have significant effect.

Therefore, do something that contradicts every other piece of advice in these pages: make a target of your carrier force. Send a small initial strike force, unescorted. This will do some damage and alert the Broome forces to trouble. Maximize standard CAP on both CVLs, and await the return strike. It is crucial not to send the Zeroes and Claudes on the strike, or there will not be enough of them to successfully defend the CVLs. It is equally crucial to send a strike, as otherwise the enemy squadron might still break through. Even a single hit on one of the carriers will cause enough of a victory point loss as to render the capture of Broome meaningless, so be very, very careful with this tactic.

DEFENDING CARRIERS

No single target in the game is worth so much as a heavy carrier; therefore, your enemy will be trying desperately to send yours to the bottom. In order to prevent this from happening, use these simple but effective tricks:

- Don't let him find you. Always, always keep the task force containing the carriers on the move. This blunts air attacks as much or more than sea attacks.

- Maximize the misunderstanding and confusion among the enemy search planes. If you have a spare task force, move them in between your carrier force and the enemy. Search planes will report just about every capital ship as a carrier; use your cruisers as a screen to absorb airstrikes.

- Keep twice as many CAP planes in the air as you think you need. You'll appreciate your caution when that unexpected airstrike hits.

- Never take your task force anywhere near a land base with significant air assets. Even the most dedicated CAP will be unable to fend off the wave after wave of medium or heavy bombers that these bases launch.



Time your land base strike missions until enemy pilots are headed home. Out of fuel, they'll be forced to land under your bombs or ditch their planes.

KEEPING YOUR
AIRPLANES SAFE

Air losses are an unavoidable result of naval combat. Pilots will prang on takeoffs and landings, and others will never return. This constant degradation of your combat capability hurts not only your ability to achieve mission objectives but also your standing in the victory levels, since destroyed planes cost you victory points. There are, fortunately, steps which you can take to protect your planes. These are:

- Never launch a strike when the planes must land at night, or even at dusk. Accidents will increase dramatically. Remember to reduce CAP at this time as well to avoid this problem.

- Wait (if possible) for a better range. Wounded planes can travel a few miles better than a few hundred. You'll lose far fewer planes to damage, as more actually return to the carrier or base.

- Mass your strikes. Time strikes from several directions at the same target; overwhelm its defenses. Always, always, always set the fighters on escort; there just may be enemy air power you weren't aware of. Plan missions very conservatively.

VICTORY POINTS

No one needs to be told to carefully observe victory conditions before proceeding with the scenarios. However, Carriers at War II is not content to isolate these battles from the campaigns from which they sprang. As Nagumo, you may succeed in capturing Darwin and Broome in the Port Darwin scenario according to orders, but if you lose three-quarters of your carrier's planes doing so, it's an effective loss for the Japanese, since later operations in that theater by Nagumo's task force will have to be curtailed or stopped altogether.

Therefore, besides doing your customary scanning of victory conditions for ultimatums, also check the relative victory point values of your forces in order to more accurately gauge the value of certain achievements. Consider the Port Darwin Invasion scenario as an example. Invading Dili (the real focus of the scenario) is worth a maximum of 64 victory points. Invading Darwin itself is only worth 19. Yet, at a victory point cost of three per naval bomber, Nagumo must shepherd the invasion without losing more than 6 bombers. If this total is exceeded, you've already paid more for Darwin than you're likely to get back.

Does this mean you should always leave your bombers safe and sound on the carrier decks?

Far from it. What it does mean is that you must be extremely cognizant of the risks and rewards of certain actions before undertaking them.

To continue the Port Darwin example, there are other fruits in Darwin than Darwin itself. A supply force sits in Darwin's harbor, ripe for the plucking. Eleven American transports, guarded only by a seaplane tender and a small destroyer. These make fine targets, comprising an additional 87 victory points at little risk. Your Vals, who die like flies over well-defended targets like Darwin, will happily and safely send the transports to the bottom. You'll certainly lose fewer than 27 Vals and you'll gain plenty by it.

Not all situations will be as clear cut, due to the vagaries of surface combat. The Bali invasion force will certainly meet with the Dutch opposition forces. One of these forces, ABDA2, contains numerous destroyers that the Allied side doesn't even lose points for losing. This is a no-win situation for the Japanese, who must commit (and lose) forces to eliminate what are basically attrition forces. The best option here is full avoidance; failing that impossibility, you'll just have to deal with points slipping from your fingers.

There are also certain point realities that complement or supplant conditions on victory. For

example, the loss of either the Kaga or the Akagi will result in a British marginal win at best in the Port Darwin scenario. But the loss of the Soryu or the Hiryu will give the Allies 40 and 45 points, respectively. This is easily enough to shove the final victory totals a level or two in the direction of the opposition. Certain vessels represent enough of a tremendous point asset to be a target in and of themselves. The Allied ship Houston is worth an additional 20 points, making it worth a couple of bombers or destroyers to sink or damage. In any scenario with carriers, each carrier is well worth a victory level or more by itself, regardless of scenario conditions.

And these selfsame victory conditions will sometimes necessitate risks or losses that seem to outweigh the victory point totals. The invasion of Singoraja is an example, since it yields tiny victory points at a great risk to the invasion force. Yet it must be done. Grit your teeth and accept these situations. There's nothing you can do about them.

The upshot of all of this is that it is necessary to play Carriers at War II more conservatively than many other wargames. Judge carefully before releasing those planes or ordering that task force in closer. Is the probable gain worth the possible loss? Releasing planes is guaranteed to produce loss due to pranging on takeoff and mistakes on landing, even if they see no hostile action. Will they either a) support or fulfill a necessary mission or b) kill more victory points than they suffer? If the answer to either of these is no, keep the pilots grounded. Warships should also use this advice. Destroyers are worth little compared to the bigger ships, and a crowd of four or five could take down a heavy cruiser or better.

Remember to keep a close eye on your victory points. A good total can salvage a poor mission, and vice versa.

-Kevin Perry



Avoid the heartbreak of result screens like this. Too many naval bombers were wasted on targets that weren't worth the risk.

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